

NATURALOPY

PRECEPT 5

SPIRITUALITY





NATURALOPY

CELEBRATING HUMANITY

Since time immemorial, our ancestors have gone to great lengths to fabricate myths and fables to answer the six primary existential questions of life:

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

For thousands of years, the East Indians, Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past have conjured fairy tales of a god or group of gods to justify their existence. We now look at their abandoned gods and think how naive and backward our ancestors must have been.

Today, the Christians, Jews, and Muslims hold steadfast to the idea that an omnipotent figure created the Universe and Earth 6,000 - 10,000 years ago. And that all humans were seeded by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden somewhere in modern day Iran or Iraq. These beliefs persist despite the fact that science has refuted and disclaimed those assertions with empirical evidence—evidence that can be verified by anyone willing to do the research. Most don't, thus the perpetual conflict between the Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

The Universe is roughly 13.8 billion years old; the Earth 4.6 billion years old; Humans are the product of evolution, 4.3 billion years in the making.

There is no need to attribute to the gods what Humanity has achieved.

Naturalopy (naCHərə lō pē)

noun

1. The philosophy of adopting universal knowledge and collective wisdom from historical and contemporary sources to form a belief system.
2. The Naturalopist belief system, founded on the shared knowledge and experiences of Humanity; modern philosophy; natural philosophy.

Naturalopist (naCHərə lō pist)

noun

1. One who believes in universal knowledge and collective wisdom as a basis for her or his moral guidelines and belief system; naturalist; spiritualist.
2. One who embraces the 20 Naturalopic Precepts as a guideline for a worldview; acknowledges the law of cause and effect.
3. One who adopts preeminent ideologies and philosophies regardless of their origin; objective mindset.

Naturalopic (naCHərə lō pik)

adjective

Of or relating to the precepts of Naturalopy; collective knowledge, objectivity, cause and effect, empirical evidence, spirituality, transparency, natural philosophy, Nature; equality before the Law, beneficial to Humanity.

The 20 Precepts of Naturalopy

Precept (pre sept)
noun

A rule, directive, or principle that guides one’s actions, particularly as pertains to moral conduct.

Naturalopy is structured into 20 primary precepts, most of them with supporting precepts.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Freewill | 11. Happiness |
| 2. Karma | 12. Love |
| 3. Simplicity | 13. Dreams |
| 4. Health | 14. Wisdom |
| 5. Spirituality | 15. Success |
| 6. Compassion | 16. Suffering |
| 7. Purpose | 17. Forgiveness |
| 8. Virtue | 18. Salvation |
| 9. Attitude | 19. Liberty |
| 10. Character | 20. Time |

When taken as a whole and expanded in detail, the Naturalopic framework of 20 precepts is more comprehensive in scope than any single religion or philosophy because it embraces all available knowledge.

Life can be complex, therefore our moral guidelines and belief system are only complete, accurate, and objective when they’re derived from multiple historical and contemporary sources, regardless of their origin.

Life did not come with a manual. Life is a learning process. We make mistakes; we are not sinners. The better choices we make, the higher our quality of life. But we can only make better choices when we are enlightened...

NATURALOPY

PRECEPT 5

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PRECEPT 5

SPIRITUALITY

spirituality

metaphysical, sacred, ethereal, nonphysical, pure, incorporeal

1. Concern for that which is unseen and intangible, as opposed to physical or mundane.
2. The quality or state of being spiritual.

Most of us seek a spiritual life after prolonged unease and calamity. Most pursue answers in churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and political affiliations—all of which are unnecessary. The truths and answers to life are not in religion and politics, but in science and self-education.

We cannot undo what was said or done in the past, we can only move forward and do good. Eventually, our good deeds will outweigh our past misdeeds and balance our karma—this is the essence of spirituality. To know that we have done good and touched the lives of others in a positive way is soothing to our soul.

There are three steps to rekindle a spiritual life. They are:

1. Acceptance. Accept the mistakes we have made and blame no one.
2. Forgiveness. Forgive ourself, and all those involved.
3. Redemption. Do good to rebalance our karma.

If we knew all the answers to life the day we were born, we would not experience the trials and tribulations of life, which means we would have no life. Life is a journey and that's what makes it mysterious and exciting. Life is an experiment, and with all experiments, mistakes are made.

An important spiritual note is to not confuse reality with spirituality. For example, when dealing with some people, reality and spirituality can be two different realms.

The majority of people we meet in life are on the same spiritual journey as we are on. However, there are the rare minority who disregard reason and lack common sense. These people include religious fanatics, psychopaths, and sociopaths. Studies have suggested that these sociopaths and psychopaths hold the highest positions of power in government and corporations. These people do not understand common sense, compassion, and reason. They are hedonistic, selfish, and greedy; therefore, must be dealt with differently than the majority of the people. The point is: don't be like them. Be better.

When in doubt, remember the Naturalopic philosophy of life: Life didn't come with a manual. Life is a learning process. We make mistakes; we are not sinners. The better choices we make, the higher our quality of life.

The journey of metanoia is ours to take alone; to explore and enjoy.

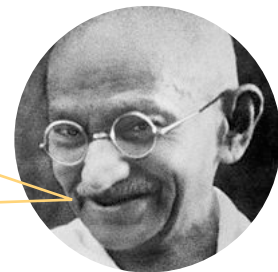
metanoia: change in one's way of life resulting from penitence or spiritual conversion.



We are not human beings having a spiritual experience.
We are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Spiritual relationship is far more precious than physical. Physical relationship divorced from spiritual is body without soul.



Mahatma Gandhi



Deepak Chopra

Enlightened leadership is spiritual if we understand spirituality not as some kind of religious dogma or ideology but as the domain of awareness where we experience values like truth, goodness, beauty, love and compassion, and also intuition, creativity, insight and focused attention.

No person is an island entirely of itself; every person is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. Any person's death diminishes me, because I am involved in humankind; And therefore, never send to know for whom the bell tolls—it tolls for thee.

John Donne





It is only because of problems that we grow mentally and spiritually.

M. Scott Peck



One of the most spiritual things you can do is embrace your humanity. Connect with those around you today. Say “I love you”, “I’m sorry”, “I appreciate you”, “I’m proud of you”, or whatever you’re feeling. Send random texts, write a cute note, embrace your truth, share it, and give plenty of hugs.

Steve Maraboli

Peace starts within each one of us. When we have inner peace, we can be at peace with those around us. When our community is in a state of peace, it can share peace with neighboring communities, and so on. When we feel love and kindness toward others, it makes others feel loved and cared for, and it helps us to develop inner happiness and peace.



Dalai Lama XIV

Ludwig van Beethoven



Music is the mediator between the spiritual and sensual life.



Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force—that thoughts rule the world.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life.



Buddha



I learned that the interior of life was as rewarding as the exterior of life, and that my richest moments occurred when I was absolutely still.

Richard Bode



Spiritual energy brings compassion into the world.

Christina Baldwin

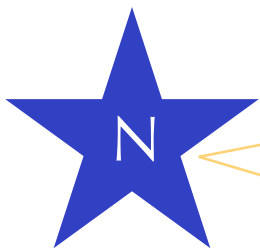


Drugs or overeating or alcohol or sex, it was all just another way to find peace. To escape what we know. Our education. Our bite of the apple.

Chuck Palahniuk

When you think everything is someone else's fault you will suffer. When you realize that everything springs only from yourself, you will learn both peace and joy.

Dalai Lama XIV



Naturalopist

You can't fix your broken self by breaking someone else. Penitence first, forgiveness, then redemption.

If you want to awaken all of humanity, then awaken yourself.

If you want to eliminate the suffering in the world, then eliminate all that is dark and negative in yourself.

Truly, the greatest gift you have to give is that of your own self-transformation.



Lao Tzu



A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Science is not only compatible with spirituality; it is a profound source of spirituality. When we recognize our place in an immensity of light—years and in the passage of ages, when we grasp the intricacy, beauty, and subtlety of life, then that soaring feeling, that sense of elation and humility combined, is surely spiritual. So are our emotions in the presence of great art or music or literature, or acts of exemplary selfless courage such as those of Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr. The notion that science and spirituality are somehow mutually exclusive does a disservice to both.



Carl Sagan

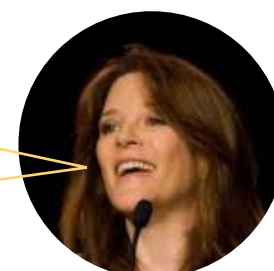


Enlightenment is, in the end, nothing more than the natural state of being.

Adyashanti

Marianne Williamson

Spiritual growth involves mental discipline: If I'm about to judge, I can choose not to; if I'm about to focus on someone's mistakes, I can choose to think mercifully; if I'm about to act out of a weakness, I can choose to be strong.



SOUL

soul

essence, afterlife, being, conscience, energy, spirit

1. The spirit or essence of a person usually thought to consist of one's thoughts, personality, and deeds. Often believed to live on after the person's death.
2. The spirit or essence of something.

Our soul is like a candle—how long it burns after we die depends on if it's relit by those we leave behind. For example, the souls of Michael Faraday, James Maxwell, Isaac Newton, Dimitri Mendeleev, and Albert Einstein are immortal, for their candles are re-lit everyday by school children, teachers, professors, engineers, scientists, inventors, and admirers. That is their reward for service to Humanity; that is their continued existence after death. They have left their essence on Humanity.

Our contribution need not be on such a grand scale for our soul to endure. Good community work, empowering others, and raising responsible children will ensure that our candle stays lit after we've moved on.

Our soul will live on in loved ones and the lives we've empowered.

Every thought, every word, and every deed leave an imprint on our soul. And of those we leave behind. Nature created us, so to destroy Her is to destroy ourselves.

There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.



Carl Jung

Our soul, our true self, is the most mysterious, essential, and magical dimension of our being. In fact, it is not a separate reality, as traditional Western thought views it, but the cohesive force that unites our body, heart, and mind. It is not a ghost trapped somehow in the physical machinery of our body but the very essence of our being.



Gabrielle Roth

Just as a mirror, which reflects all things, is set in its own container, so too the rational soul is placed in the fragile container of the body. In this way, the body is governed in its earthly life by the soul, and the soul contemplates heavenly things through faith.



Hildegard of Bingen

Heal the soul first; then healing of the mind and body will follow.



Zhi Gang Sha



I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley



You don't have a soul. You are a soul.
You have a body.

C.S. Lewis

The soul doesn't distinguish between good and bad as much as between what is nutritious and what isn't. Finding the right work is like discovering your own soul in the world.

Thomas Moore



At the end of the day, you will not remember the person with the beautiful face, but you will remember the person with the most beautiful heart and soul.



Naturalopist

The soul is indestructible and its activity will continue through eternity. It is like the sun, which, to our eyes, seems to set at night; but it has in reality only gone to diffuse its light elsewhere.



Johann Goethe

You cannot find your soul with your mind, you must use your heart.



Gary Zukav



If we expended all our energies solely on taking care of our own needs we would stop growing. In that respect what we call “soul” can be viewed as the surplus energy that can be invested into change and transformation. As such, it is the cutting edge of evolution.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi



We need silence to be able to touch souls.

Mother Teresa

The soul is dyed the color of its thoughts. Think only on those things that are in line with your principles and can bear the light of day. The content of your character is your choice. Day by day, what you do is who you become. Your integrity is your destiny—it is the light that guides your way.



Heraclitus

All men's souls are immortal, but the souls of the righteous are immortal and divine.



Socrates

Only when we find the quietness in our own minds can we begin to hear our inner teacher, so that we may receive some intuition. Only when we are ready to recognize and value the wisdom that we carry at the core of our being will we turn our attention inwards and “listen in.” Sit down, be quiet and listen in at some point today and you may be surprised at what you hear. Then do it again tomorrow. All you need to do is remember that you are the listener and not the noise.



Lilly Calandrello



Look carefully around you and recognize the Luminosity of Souls. Sit beside those who draw you to that.

Rumi



To do, is to be.

Socrates

Happiness resides not in possessions, and not in gold, happiness dwells in the soul.



Democritus

Spiritual relationship is far more precious than physical. Physical relationship divorced from spiritual is body without soul.



Mahatma Gandhi

Fear must be entirely banished. The purified soul will fear nothing.



Plotinus

The dream is the small hidden door in the deepest and most intimate sanctum of the soul, which opens to that primeval cosmic night that was soul long before there was conscious ego and will be soul far beyond what a conscious ego could ever reach. The part of the human Self or Soul is not subject to laws of space and time.



Carl Jung

Since love grows within you, so beauty grows. For love is the beauty of the soul.



Saint Augustine

Regarding the afterlife, the soul is the ethereal part of our Being that lives in the memories of those we leave behind. Whether that soul is condemned or praised in the afterlife depends on our karma while we lived.



Trung Nguyen



The soul, like the body, lives by what it feeds on.

Josiah Holland

The soul always knows how to heal itself.
The challenge is to silence the mind.



Caroline Myss

If you don't take risks,
you'll have a wasted soul.



Drew Barrymore

Every book, every volume you see here, has a soul. The soul of the person who wrote it and of those who read it and lived and dreamed with it. Every time a book changes hands, every time someone runs his eyes down its pages, its spirit grows and strengthens.



Carlos Ruiz

My soul is not asleep. It is awake, wide awake. It neither sleeps nor dreams, but watches, its eyes wide open far-off things, and listens at the shores of the great



Antonio Machado

The Human Spirit is stronger than anything that can happen to it.



C.C. Scott

Let my soul smile through my heart and my heart smile through my eyes, that I may scatter rich smiles in sad hearts.



Paramahansa Yogananda



Live life and share from your heart. Your story will touch and heal souls.

Melody Beattie



It is great wealth to a soul to live frugally with a contented mind.

Lucretius

I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver.



Maya Angelou



A soul connection is a resonance between two people who respond to the essential beauty of each other's individual natures, behind their facades, and who connect on this deeper level.

John Welwood

Nowhere can man find a quieter or more untroubled retreat than in his own soul.



Marcus Aurelius

You are a powerful, unlimited and eternal soul who is here to enjoy the experience of creativity and contribute to humanity's evolution.



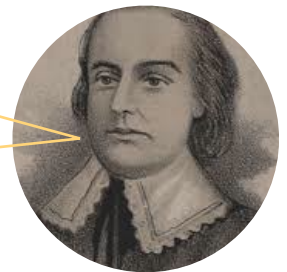
Naturalopist



I think immortality is the passing of a soul through many lives or experiences, and such as are truly lived, used and learned, help on to the next, each growing richer, happier and higher, carrying with it only the real memories of what has gone before.

Louisa May Alcott

The choice that you, as a soul, have in relation to anything is always to be loving. Do you understand that this is the divine purpose, that all of us as humans have been given, to love unconditionally?



John Morton



The body is your temple. Keep it pure and clean for the soul to reside in.

B.K.S. Iyengar

Imagination is the eye of the soul.



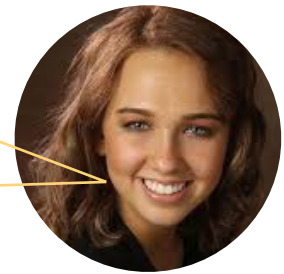
Joseph Joubert



In Nature, trees, flowers, and grass grow in silence.
We need silence to be able to touch souls.

Wilbur Pierce

No matter what happens around us, or to us,
through love, our soul reaches immortality,
conquering all dimensions and all destinies.



Akiane Kramarik



And the more souls who resonate together the
greater the intensity of their love and, mirror-like,
each soul reflects the other.

Dante Alighieri

The beauty of a woman is not in a facial mode but the true
beauty in a woman is reflected in her soul. It is the caring
that she lovingly gives the passion that she shows. The
beauty of a woman grows with the passing years.



Audry Hepburn

You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul.



Swami Vivekananda

You have the need and the right to spend part of your life caring for your soul. It is not easy. You have to resist the demands of the work-oriented, often defensive, element in your psyche that measures life only in terms of output—how much you produce—not in terms of the quality of your life experiences. To be a soulful person means to go against all the pervasive, prove-yourself values of our culture and instead treasure what is unique and internal and valuable in yourself and your own personal evolution.



Jean Shinoda Bolen



Your own soul is nourished when you are kind; it is destroyed when you are cruel.

King Solomon



By all means use some time to be alone, salute thyself, see what thy soul doth wear.

George Herbert

Our souls are hungry for meaning, for the sense that we have figured out how to live so that our lives matter, so that the world will be at least a little bit different for our having passed through it. What frustrates us and robs our lives of joy is this absence of meaning. Does our being alive matter?



Harold S. Kushner



Love is the vital essence that pervades and permeates, from the center to the circumference, the graduating circles of all thought and action. Love is the talisman of human weal and woe—the open sesame to every soul.

Elizabeth Cady

Meditation is the life of the soul: Action, the soul of meditation. and honor the reward of action.



Francis Quarles



Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as well as think.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

From the very beginning you are being told to compare yourself with others. This is the greatest disease; it is like a cancer that goes on destroying your very soul because each individual is unique, and comparison is not possible. I am just myself and you are just yourself. There is nobody else in the world you can be compared with.



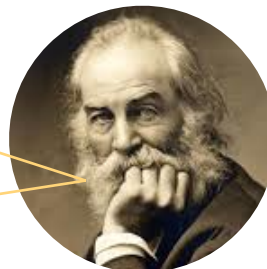
Osho

Give yourself the gift of time in coming to answers for your life. It takes time, and a lot of introspection and soul-searching, to get clear about what you really want to manifest in your life.



David Emerald

Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million universes.



Walt Whitman

It is not your outward appearance that you should beautify, but your soul, adorning it with good works.



Clement of Alexandria

The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.



Black Elk



You find your soul when you find your passion in life.

Naturalopist



Daniel Defoe

The soul is placed in the body like a rough diamond, and must be polished, or the luster of it will never appear.



Napoleon Hill

Cherish your visions and your dreams as they are the children of your soul, the blue-prints of your ultimate achievements.

Without work, all life goes rotten. But when work is soulless, life stifles and dies.



Albert Camus

Because to influence a person is to give him one's own soul. He does not think his natural thoughts, or burn with his natural passions. His virtues are not real to him. His sins, if there are such things as sins, are borrowed. He becomes an echo of some one else's music, an actor of a part that has not been written for him. The aim of life is self-development. To realize one's nature perfectly—that is what each of us is here for. People are afraid of themselves, nowadays. They have forgotten the highest of all duties, the duty that one owes to oneself. Of course they are charitable. They feed the hungry, and clothe the beggar. But their own souls starve, and are naked. Courage has gone out of our race. Perhaps we never really had it. The terror of society, which is the basis of morals, the terror of God, which is the secret of religion—these are the two things that govern us.



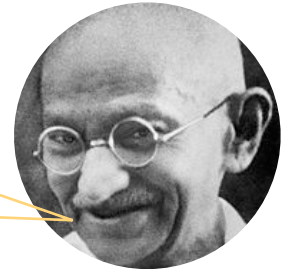
Oscar Wilde

Courage is the price that Life exacts for granting peace, The soul that knows it not, knows no release from little things.



Amelia Earhart

A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people.



Mahatma Gandhi

Every thought, every word, and every deed leave an imprint on our soul.



Trung Nguyen



Lao Tzu

Music in the soul can be heard by the universe.



Dante Alighieri

Beauty awakens the soul to act.

NATURE

nature

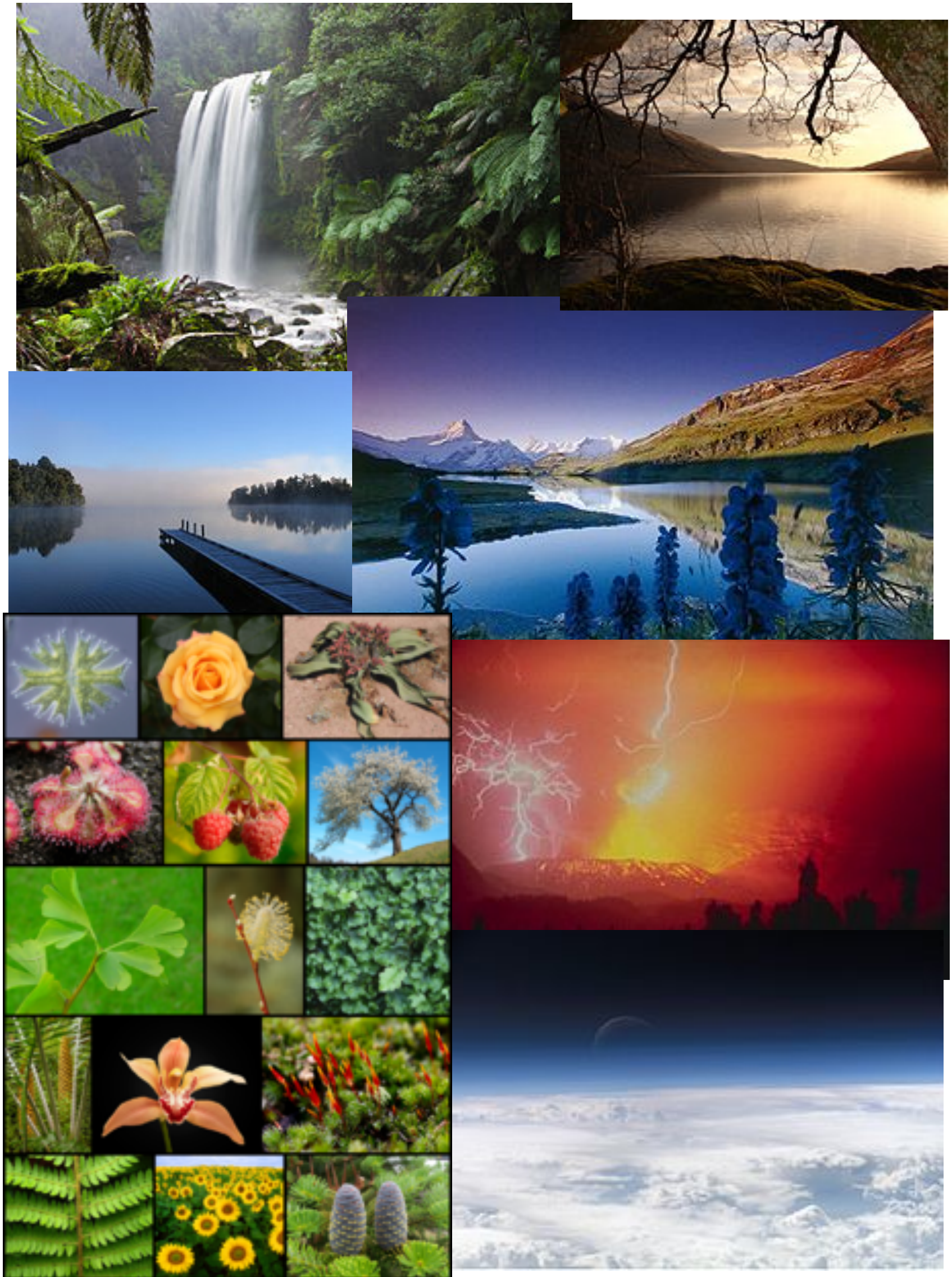
animals, plants, sunlight, air, water, sky, lakes, oceans, mountains, life, agriculture, permaculture, environment, cosmos, origin

1. The natural world, consisting of all things unaffected by or predating human technology, production, and design.

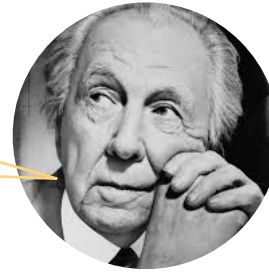
Our nature is not aligned with Nature—this is the source of Humanity’s suffering. Our wants immeasurably exceed our needs; we take more from the earth than we put back in it. Nature designed Earth to be sustainable and self-sufficient, but humankind has demolished this ecosystem with its greed. What took Nature hundreds of millions of years to create is now damaged in a span of a few years, and some of these damages are irreversible. The contaminated water, polluted air, and toxic soil are the result of Humanity’s contempt for Nature’s Laws. The consequences of this disconnect between our nature and Nature is most evident in increased illness, disease, and the deteriorating environment.

Nature creates. Nature nourishes. Nature heals.

So should we. To be in agreement with Nature, our lifestyle should be sustainable, our body nourished by substances from Nature, and our body permeated with Nature. That is, meet our needs and reduce our wants, eat only food that Nature has created; and enjoy the sunlight, fresh air, water, and blue sky everyday. Those are a few ways to permeate our body with Nature.



I believe in God, only I spell it Nature.



Frank Lloyd Wright

Forests, lakes, and rivers, clouds and winds, stars and flowers, stupendous glaciers and crystal snowflakes—every form of animate or inanimate existence, leaves its impress upon the soul of man.



Orison Swett Marden

Luxurious food and drinks in no way protect you from harm. Wealth, beyond what is natural is of no more use than an overflowing container. Nothing is enough for the man to whom enough is too little. Real value is not generated by theaters, and baths, perfumes or ointments, but by philosophy.



Epicurus



I am pessimistic about the human race because it is too ingenious for its own good. Our approach to nature is to beat it into submission. We would stand a better chance of survival if we accommodated ourselves to this planet and viewed it appreciatively instead of skeptically and dictatorially.

Rachel Carson

All truly great thoughts are conceived while walking.



Friedrich Nietzsche

The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us the less taste we shall have for the destruction of our race. Wonder and humility are wholesome emotions, and they do not exist side by side with a lust for destruction.



Rachel Carson

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul.

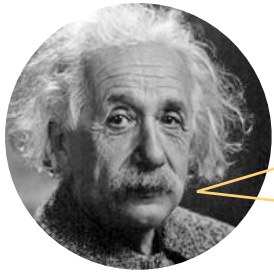


Alfred Austin

But man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself.



Rachel Carson



Look deep into Nature, and then you will understand everything better.

Albert Einstein



Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.

John Lubbock



Within the laws of Nature, nothing is too wonderful to be true.

Michael Faraday



Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather.

John Ruskin

Those who contemplate the beauty of the Earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.



Rachel Carson

The beauty of the natural world lies in the details.



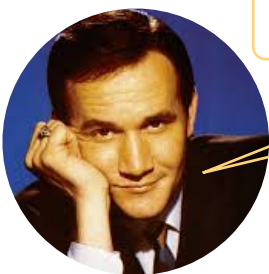
Natalie Angier

To stand at the edge of the sea, to sense the ebb and flow of the tides, to feel the breath of a mist moving over a great salt marsh, to watch the flight of shore birds that have swept up and down the surf lines of the continents for untold thousands of years, to see the running of the old eels and the young shad to the sea, is to have knowledge of things that are as nearly eternal as any earthly life can be.



Rachel Carson

Some people walk in the rain, others just get wet.



Roger Miller

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.



Rachel Carson

Our challenge isn't so much to teach children about the natural world, but to find ways to nurture and sustain the instinctive connections they already carry.



Terry Krautwurst

At some point in life, the world's beauty becomes enough.



Toni Morrison



In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.

John Muir



Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons: It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

Walt Whitman



In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.

Aristotle

True nature, the Essence of the soul, is valuable, is worthy of appreciation of love, not because it gives her something, not because it adds to her, not because it liberates her, but because it is beautiful. Its value is in its beauty and perfection. Its truth is its value, and this truth is the essence of all beauty. The beauty of a form turns out to be this transparency to true nature. The more a manifest form expresses and embodies true nature with its timeless features, the more the eyes of the soul behold it as beautiful. Beauty is a reflection of truth, and is ultimately true nature. And the dimension of true nature that reveals this essential beauty is that of divine love.



Hameed Ali

Rachel Carson

In nature nothing exists alone.



Never does nature say one thing
and wisdom another.



Juvenal

It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn
again to the earth and in the contemplation of her
beauties to know the sense of wonder and humility.



Rachel Carson



John Muir

Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Na-
ture's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into
trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into
you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop
away from you like the leaves of Autumn.

Nature is an infinite sphere whose center is
everywhere and circumference nowhere.



Blaise Pascal

Just living is not enough. One must have
sunshine, freedom, and a little flower.



Hans Christian Andersen



Cicero

Time destroys the speculation of men, but
it confirms the judgement of nature.



Hazrat Inayat

Now if I do anything it is to tune souls instead of instru-
ments. To harmonize people instead of notes. If there is any-
thing in my philosophy, it is the law of harmony: that one
must put oneself in harmony with oneself and with others.

In a moment the ashes are made, but
a forest is a long time growing.



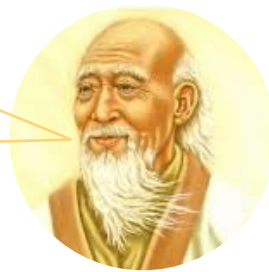
Seneca

To sit in the shade on a fine day and look upon verdure is the most perfect refreshment.



Jane Austen

Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.



Lao Tzu

To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug.



Helen Keller

Climb up on some hill at sunrise. Everybody needs perspective once in a while, and you'll find it there.



Robb Sagendorph

Nature uses only the longest threads to weave her patterns, so that each small piece of her fabric reveals the organization of the entire tapestry.



Richard Feynman

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.



William Shakespeare



Dale Carnegie

One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today.

The best way to touch Nature is a 40 minute walk everyday. The sunlight, fresh air, blue sky, and bird chirps permeate the body and invigorate the mind.



Trung Nguyen

The fairest thing in nature, a flower,
still has its roots in earth and manure.



D. H. Lawrence

A quiet secluded life in the country, with the possibility
of being useful to people to whom it is easy to do good,
and who are not accustomed to have it done to them;
then work which one hopes may be of some use; then
rest, nature, books, music, love for one's neigh-
bor—such is my idea of happiness.



Leo Tolstoy

May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome,
dangerous, leading to the most amazing view.



Edward Abbey

The wilderness holds answers to questions man
has not yet learned to ask.



Nancy Newhall

In the spring, at the end of the day,
you should smell like dirt.



Margaret Atwood



J.J. Thomas

To harmonize with the surrounding scenery,
to enter into the spirit of the landscape,
in the highest beauty of domestic building.



Lao Tzu

To see things in the seed, that is genius.



Elizabeth Lawrence

The hum of bees is the voice of the garden.



In seed time learn, in harvest teach,
in winter enjoy.

William Blake

We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil and the gas are exhausted.



Theodore Roosevelt

Today I have grown taller from
walking with the trees.



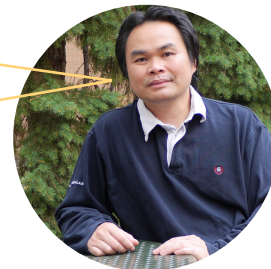
Karle Wilson Baker

Despite the forecast, live like it's spring.



Lilly Pulitzer

We are the product of Nature. She designs, creates, and recycles with no waste. In health, philosophy, design, business, and time, Her guidelines should be our guidelines.



Trung Nguyen



Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea, are excellent schoolmasters, and teach some of us more than we can ever learn from books.

John Lubbock

I've loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night.



Galileo Galilei

In the depth of winter I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer.



Albert Camus

Wherever you go, no matter what the weather,
always bring your own sunshine.



Anthony J. D'Angelo

Nothing is more memorable than a smell. One
scent can be unexpected, momentary and fleet-
ing, yet conjure up a childhood summer beside a
lake in the mountains.



Diane Ackerman

Earth laughs in flowers.



Ralph Waldo Emerson

Let the rain kiss you. Let the rain beat
upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let
the rain sing you a lullaby.



Langston Hughes



I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery—air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, “This is what it is to be happy.”

Sylvia Plath

A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.



Albert Einstein



Time spent amongst trees is never wasted time.

Katrina Mayer

Every flower is a soul blossoming in nature.



Gerard De Nerval

Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.



Ralph Waldo Emerson

Turn your face to the sun and the shadows fall behind you.



Maori Proverb



Wildness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from.

Terry Tempest Williams

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but Nature more

George Gordon Byron



TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

To everything there is a season
A time for every purpose under Heaven

A time to be born
and a time to die
A time to plant
and a time to pluck what is planted

A time to kill
and a time to heal
A time to break down
and a time to build up

A time to cast away stones
and a time to gather stones
A time to embrace
and a time to refrain from embracing

A time to gain
and a time to lose
A time to keep
and a time to cast away

A time to tear
and a time to sew
A time to keep silence
and a time to speak

A time of love
and a time of hate
A time of war
and a time of peace

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

RELIGION

religion

cult, mythology, secularism, superstition, piety, supernatural, segregation, division

1. The belief in and worship of a supernatural controlling power, especially a personal god or gods.
2. A particular system of faith and worship based on unproven methodologies; lacking empirical evidence; blind faith.

The wise among us are born twice; the second time by Enlightenment and Nature. Ever since time immemorial, every civilization has attempted to answer the six metaphysical questions of existence:

1. Where did we come from?
2. What is our purpose in life?
3. Why do bad things happen to us?
4. Is there a god?
5. Are we alone in the Universe?
6. What happens to us after we die?

In answering these existential questions, our ancestors, lacking basic knowledge of science and collective knowledge, went to great lengths to create elaborate myths and fables. It is not a coincidence that most religions are based on an omnipotent deity residing on mountaintops or in the clouds. The reason that most religions share the same themes is because they “borrowed” ideas from one another, akin to how different languages share a similar alphabet and syntax. Despite advances in technology and science that disprove religion, billions of people still believe what our ancestors believed 6,000 years ago.

The average religious person reads about 500 pages of text that have little to do with the modern world. This indoctrination stunts the intellectual growth of many adherents and blunts them with a false worldview. Religion is not required for a spiritual life, we can attain spirituality through personal experience and the collective wisdom of Humanity.

For millennia, religion taught us that:

- the Sun revolved around the Earth
- the Earth was flat
- god created the Earth in 6 days
- the Earth was about 6,000 years old
- Earth's population was seeded by Adam and Eve in a corner of the Middle East

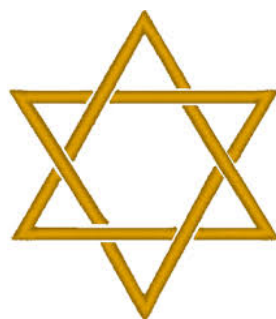
All of which have been proven to be incorrect.

The Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past all believed in gods. We now know that those gods were fabricated by our unenlightened ancestors. If we are to take our place among the stars, it is time we abandon our gods and put our faith in a united Humanity. The achievements of Humanity are for us to celebrate, there is no need to attribute them to anyone else.

Humans are not sinners. We make mistakes. The wise among us learn from them and move on.

Symbols of Oppression, Division, and Conflict

The cross of Jesus Christ, the star of David, and the star and crescent of Islam—nonsense, nonsense, nonsense...in perpetual conflict over myths and fables.



Three Religions, One Root, Different Beliefs, Dozens of Sects...In Perpetual Conflict

	CHRISTIANITY	JUDAISM	ISLAM
Years Old	2,000 - 2,400	3,300 - 6,000	1,500
Old Testament	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Testament	Yes	No	Yes
Torah	No	Yes	Yes
Quran	No	No	Yes
Adam & Eve	Yes	Yes	Yes
Abraham	Yes	Yes	Yes
Moses	Yes	Yes	Yes
Noah	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jesus Christ	Yes	No	Yes
Muhammad	No	No	Yes
Buddha	No	No	Yes

Although Islam acknowledges the other faiths, Muslims strictly adhere to the teachings of the Quran. If there is a conflict between ideologies, the word of the Quran is final. The original Jewish Semites and Arab Semites are genealogically related, sharing the same parental lineage. Most of the violence and perpetual conflict between the two peoples can be attributed to religion—their outdated belief systems in Judaism and Islam.

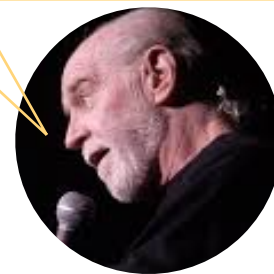
The Earth is not 6, 000 - 10,000 years old as these religions believe, but it is over 13.7 billion year old. Religion is oppression, division, and conflict.

Religion is regarded by the common people as true, by the wise as false, and by the rulers as useful.



Seneca

Religion has convinced people that there's an invisible man living in the sky who watches everything you do every minute of every day. And this invisible man has a list of ten specific things he doesn't want you to do. And if you do any of these things, he will send you to a special place, of burning and fire and smoke and torture and anguish for you to live forever, and suffer, and suffer, and burn, and scream, until the end of time. But he loves you. He loves you. He loves you and he needs money.



George Carlin



We must question the story logic of having an all-knowing all-powerful God, who creates faulty Humans, and then blames them for his own mis-

Gene Roddenberry



God: The most popular scapegoat for our sins.

Mark Twain



Religion is excellent stuff for keeping common people quiet.
Religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich.

Napoleon Bonaparte

You're basically killing each other to see
who's got the better imaginary friend.



Richard Jeni

Religion is an insult to human dignity. With or without religion, you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion.



Steve Weinberg



George Bush says he speaks to god every day, and Christians love him for it. If George Bush said he spoke to god through his hair dryer, they would think he was mad. I fail to see how the addition of a hair dryer makes it any more absurd.

Sam Harris

Religion is the masterpiece of the art of animal training, for it trains people as to how they shall think.

Arthur Schopenhauer



Don't pray in my school, and I won't think in your church.

Naturalopist

There has been an acceptance over the years that priests having sex with boys is not breaking celibacy. Churches are psychologically attractive to sex offenders because they can ask for forgiveness one day and offend again on another day. There was one priest in Victoria who admitted when caught that he had confessed 200 times and nobody had reported him, because priests are not allowed to report anyone who confesses in a confessional.



Freda Briggs

Two hands working can do more than a thousand clasped in prayer.



Naturalopist

I do not feel obliged to believe that the same good who has endowed us with senses, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use.



Galileo



By ethical conduct toward all creatures, we enter into a spiritual relationship with the universe.

Albert Schweitzer

Study one religion and you'll be hooked for life.
Study two religions and you're done in an hour.



Naturalopist



If you could reason with religious people, there would no religious people.

Dr. House, *House*



There once was a time when all people believed in God and the church ruled. This time was called the Dark Ages.

Richard Lederer

Anyone who thinks sitting in church can make you a Christian must also think that sitting in a garage can make you a car.



Garrison Keillor

All religions are riddled with scientific errors and historical inaccuracies, most so glaring that even high school students can identify them. Yet many adults refuse to accept the fact that religion financially benefits those who propagate it.



Trung Nguyen

When you understand why you dismiss all the other gods, you will understand why I dismiss yours.



Stephen Roberts



It is difficult to free fools from the chains they revere.

Voltaire

Why does it not say anywhere in the Bible that slavery is wrong? How is it possible that it is not immoral to own another person? Why isn't that one of the Ten Commandments, "Thou shall not own another person"?



Mira Sorvino

If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him.



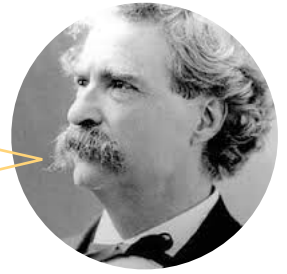
Voltaire



You don't need religion to have morals. If you can't determine right from wrong, then you lack empathy, not religion.

Randy Walker

There is no other life; life itself is only a vision and a dream for nothing exists but space and you. If there was an all-powerful God, he would have made all good, and no bad.



Mark Twain

All bibles are man-made.



Thomas Edison

When I was a kid I had an imaginary friend and I used to think that he went everywhere with me, and that I could talk to him and that he could hear me, and the he could grant me wishes and stuff. And then I grew up, and I stopped going to church.



Jimmy Carr

The Dark Ages started with the burning of one library.



Naturalopist



Organized religion is a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people.

Jesse Ventura

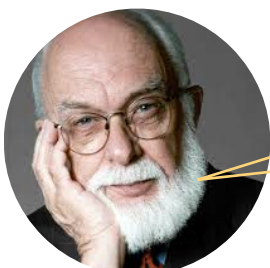
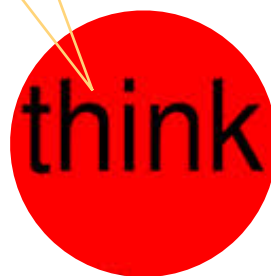


I have never seen the slightest scientific proof of the religious theories of heaven and hell, of future life for individuals, or of a personal God.

Thomas Edison

Religion is for ignorant or intellectually lazy people who refuse to spend the energy to discern how the world works. It's much easier to assign blame to a non-existent entity than to contemplate cause and effect.

Naturalopist

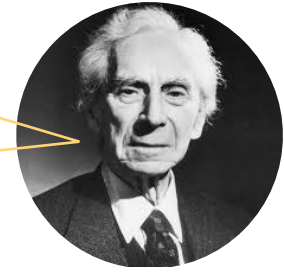


No amount of belief makes something a fact.

James Randi

And if there were a God, I think it very unlikely that He would have such an uneasy vanity as to be offended by those who doubt His existence.

Bertrand Russell



My favorite part of the Bible is when god gives people free will and then kills everyone, except Noah's family, with a flood for not acting the way he wanted.



Naturalopist

The church says the earth is flat, but I know that it is round, for I have seen the shadow on the moon, and I have more faith in a shadow than in the church.

Ferdinand Magellan



A celibate clergy is an especially good idea, because it tends to suppress any hereditary propensity toward fanaticism.

Carl Sagan



It's an incredible con job when you think about it, to believe something now in exchange for something after death. Even corporations with their reward systems don't try to make it posthumous.



Gloria Steinem

I'm completely in favor of the separation of Church and State. These two institutions screw us up enough on their own, so both of them together is certain death.



George Carlin

A man's ethical behavior should be based effectually on sympathy, education, and social ties and needs; no religious basis is necessary. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death.



Albert Einstein

I think the world needs to wake up from its long nightmare of religious belief; and anything that we scientists can do to weaken the hold of religion should be done, and may in fact be our greatest contribution to civilization.



Steve Weinberg

Where knowledge ends, religion begins.

Benjamin Disraeli



Take from the church the miraculous, the supernatural, the incomprehensible, the unreasonable, the impossible, the unknowable, the absurd, and nothing but a vacuum remains.

Robert G. Ingersoll



The most ridiculous concept ever perpetrated by Homo Sapiens is that the Lord God of Creation, Shaper and Ruler of the Universes, wants the saccharine adoration of his creations, that he can be persuaded by their prayers, and becomes petulant if he does not receive this flattery. Yet this ridiculous notion, without one real shred of evidence to bolster it, has gone on to found one of the oldest, largest and least productive industries in history.

Robert Heinlein



Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.

Blaise Pascal





Nothing can be more contrary to religion and the clergy than reason and common sense.

Voltaire



We have become so accustomed to the religious lie that surrounds us that we do not notice the atrocity, stupidity and cruelty with which the teaching of the Christian church is permeated.

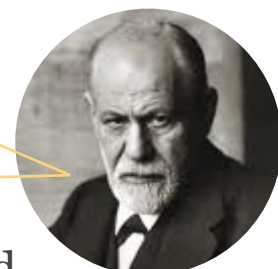
Leo Tolstoy

I have recently been examining all the known superstitions of the world, and do not find in our Christian superstition one redeeming feature. They are all alike, founded upon fables and mythologies.



Thomas Jefferson

Religion comprises a system of wishful illusions together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find in an isolated form nowhere else but in amentia, in a state of blissful hallucinatory confusion.



Sigmund Freud

Religious creeds encourage some of the craziest kinds of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors and favor severe manifestations of neurosis, borderline personality states, and sometimes even psychosis.



Albert Ellis



I believe that religion, generally speaking, has been a curse to mankind.

Henry Mencken

Not material or economic conditions in the ordinary sense, but perverse religious ideas explain the suspension of civilization in Europe from the 5th to the 12th century, and in the Mohammedan world after the 15th century.



Joseph McCabe

The man who is always worrying about whether or not his soul would be damned generally has a soul that isn't worth a damn.



Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

Man is the religious animal. He is the only religious animal. He is the only animal that has the True Religion—several of them. He is the only animal that loves his neighbor as himself and cuts his throat, if his theology isn't straight. He has made a graveyard of the globe in trying his honest best to smooth his brother's path to happiness and heaven.

Mark Twain



I consider Christian theology to be one of the greatest disasters of the human race.

Alfred North Whitehead



Religion is fundamentally opposed to everything I hold in veneration—courage, clear thinking, honesty, fairness, and, above all, love of the truth.



Henry Mencken

Thomas Edison



So far as the religion of the day is concerned, it is a damned fake. Religion is all bunk.

Science is the key to our future, and if you don't believe in science, then you're holding everybody back.



Bill Nye

If you belonged to a political party or a social club that was tied to as much bigotry, misogyny, homophobia, violence, ethnic cleansing, and sheer ignorance as religion is, you'd resign in protest.



Bill Maher

Religion segregates people. It turns people against one another. It is the most savage form of ignorance and mental control.



Trung Nguyen

Is god willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent.
Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent.
Is he both able and willing? Then whence cometh evil?
Is he neither able nor willing? Then why call him god?



Epicurus



Voltaire

Those who can make you believe in absurdities, can make you commit atrocities.

After you understand a bit of science, history, and philosophy, give yourself a good laugh by reading the Bible or any religious textbook. It should be considered a book of rowdy comedy based on the inconsistencies, contradictions, and absurdities.



Trung Nguyen

What's wrong with religion? It's mass delusion. Anytime you have mass delusion, bad things follow.



Bill Maher



Naturalopist

I used to think that God created science. But then one day I woke up and realized that I could not prove God existed using science. Therefore, science cannot be dependent on something that science cannot prove. If it can't be proven, it is just an unproven theory. So, science must stand alone. People invented God.



It's easier to fool people than to convince them they have been fooled.

Mark Twain

If the gods listened to the prayers of men, all humankind would quickly perish since they constantly pray for many evils to befall one another.



Epicurus

Religion is a belief in someone else's experience. Spirituality is having your own experience.

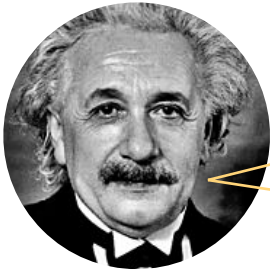


Deepak Chopra

Ingenuity is evident in every person, but stupidity is encapsulated in religion. The Christian, Jew, and Muslim are like children fighting each other to be the favourite of their parents. For millennia, each one has believed they're the chosen one. The only problem is god doesn't exist, at least not the one conjured by humans who lived in mud huts.



Trung Nguyen



Albert Einstein

The word god is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human weakness. The Bible is a collection of honorable, but still primitive legends which are nevertheless pretty childish. No interpretation no matter how subtle can change this.

We keep on being told that religion, whatever its imperfections, at least instills morality. One very side, there is conclusive evidence that the contrary is the case and that faith causes people to be more mean, more selfish, and perhaps above all, more stu-



Christopher Hitchens

Every religious person is a terrorist—intellectual terrorist hindering humanity.



Trung Nguyen

I cannot believe in a God who wants to be praised all the time.



Friedrich Nietzsche

I don't believe in God. My god is patriotism. Teach a man to be a good citizen and you have solved the problem of life.

Andrew Carnegie



What can be asserted without evidence can also be dismissed without evidence.

Christopher Hitchens



One of the complaints leveled against me is, "Oh, Bill, you're such a meanie. Why do you have to go after religion? It gives people comfort; it doesn't hurt anything."

Okay, well, other than most wars, the Crusades, the Inquisition, 9/11, arranged marriages to minors, the suppression of women and homosexuals, fatwas, ethnic cleansing, honor rape, human sacrifice, burning witches, suicide bombings, condoning slavery, systematic pedophilia, suppression of knowledge and science. There are a few little things I have a problem with.



Bill Maher

Trung Nguyen

If you need to believe in someone, believe in yourself.



THE DARK AGES

When the churches literally ruled society, the human drama encompassed:

- (a) slavery
- (b) the cruel subjection of women
- (c) the most savage forms of legal punishment
- (d) the absurd belief that kings ruled by divine right
- (e) the daily imposition of physical abuse
- (f) cold heartlessness for the sufferings of the poor
- (g) as well as assorted pogroms (“ethnic cleansing” wars) between rival religions, capital punishment for literally hundreds of offenses, and countless other daily imposed moral outrages.

It was the free-thinking, challenging work by people of conscience, who almost invariably had to defy the religious and political status quo of their times, that brought us out of such darkness.



Steve Allen

RELIGION IS BULLSHIT

In the bullshit department, a businessman can't hold a candle to a clergyman. I gotta tell you the truth, folks. I gotta tell you the truth. When it comes to bullshit, big-time, major league bullshit, you have to stand in awe of the all-time champion of false promises and exaggerated claims: religion.

No contest. No contest. Religion. Religion easily has the greatest bullshit story ever told. Think about it. Religion has actually convinced people that there's an invisible man living in the sky who watches everything you do, every minute of every day. And the invisible man has a special list of ten things he does not want you to do. And if you do any of these ten things, he has a special place, full of fire and smoke and burning and torture and anguish, where he will send you to live and suffer and burn and choke and scream and cry forever and ever until the end of time! But He loves you.

He loves you, and He needs money! He always needs money! He's all-powerful, all-perfect, all-knowing, and all-wise, somehow just can't handle money! Religion takes in billions of dollars, they pay no taxes, and they always need a little more. Now, you talk about a good bullshit story. Holy Shit!

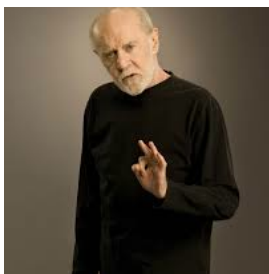
So rather than be just another mindless religious robot, mindlessly and aimlessly and blindly believing that all of this is in the hands of some spooky incompetent father figure who doesn't give a shit, I decided to look around for something else to worship. Something I could really count on.

And immediately, I thought of the sun. Happened like that. Overnight I became a sun-worshipper. Well, not overnight, you can't see the sun at night. But first thing the next morning, I became a sun-worshipper. Several reasons. First of all, I can see the sun, okay? Unlike some other gods I could mention, I can actually see the sun. I'm big on that. If I can see something, I don't know, it kind of helps the credibility along, you know? So everyday I can see the sun, as it gives me everything I need; heat, light, food, flowers in the park, reflections on the lake, an occasional skin cancer, but hey. At least there are no crucifixions, and we're not setting people on fire simply because they don't agree with us.

Sun worship is fairly simple. There's no mystery, no miracles, no pageantry, no one asks for money, there are no songs to learn, and we don't have a special building where we all gather once a week to compare clothing. And the best thing about the sun, it never tells me I'm unworthy. Doesn't tell me I'm a bad person who needs to be saved. Hasn't said an unkind word. Treats me fine. So, I worship the sun. But, I don't pray to the sun. Know why? I wouldn't presume on our friendship. It's not polite.

I've often thought people treat God rather rudely, don't you? Asking trillions and trillions of prayers every day. Asking and pleading and begging for favors. Do this, gimme that, I need a new car, I want a better job. And most of this praying takes place on Sunday His day off. It's not nice. And it's no way to treat a friend...

So to get around a lot of this, I decided to worship the sun. But, as I said, I don't pray to the sun.



George Carlin

ORIGIN

evolution

change, growth, development, progression, transformation, natural process

1. The change in the genetic composition of a population over successive generations.

abiogenesis

spontaneous order, spontaneous generation

1. The natural process of life arising from non-living matter such as simple inorganic compounds.

The origin of life debate consists of two camps: Evolutionists versus Creationists. Or science versus religion, abiogenesis versus biogenesis, empirical evidence versus myth, and Darwinism versus Creationism. These theories are incompatible with each other. In many cases, they contradict each other. However, there is only one truth.

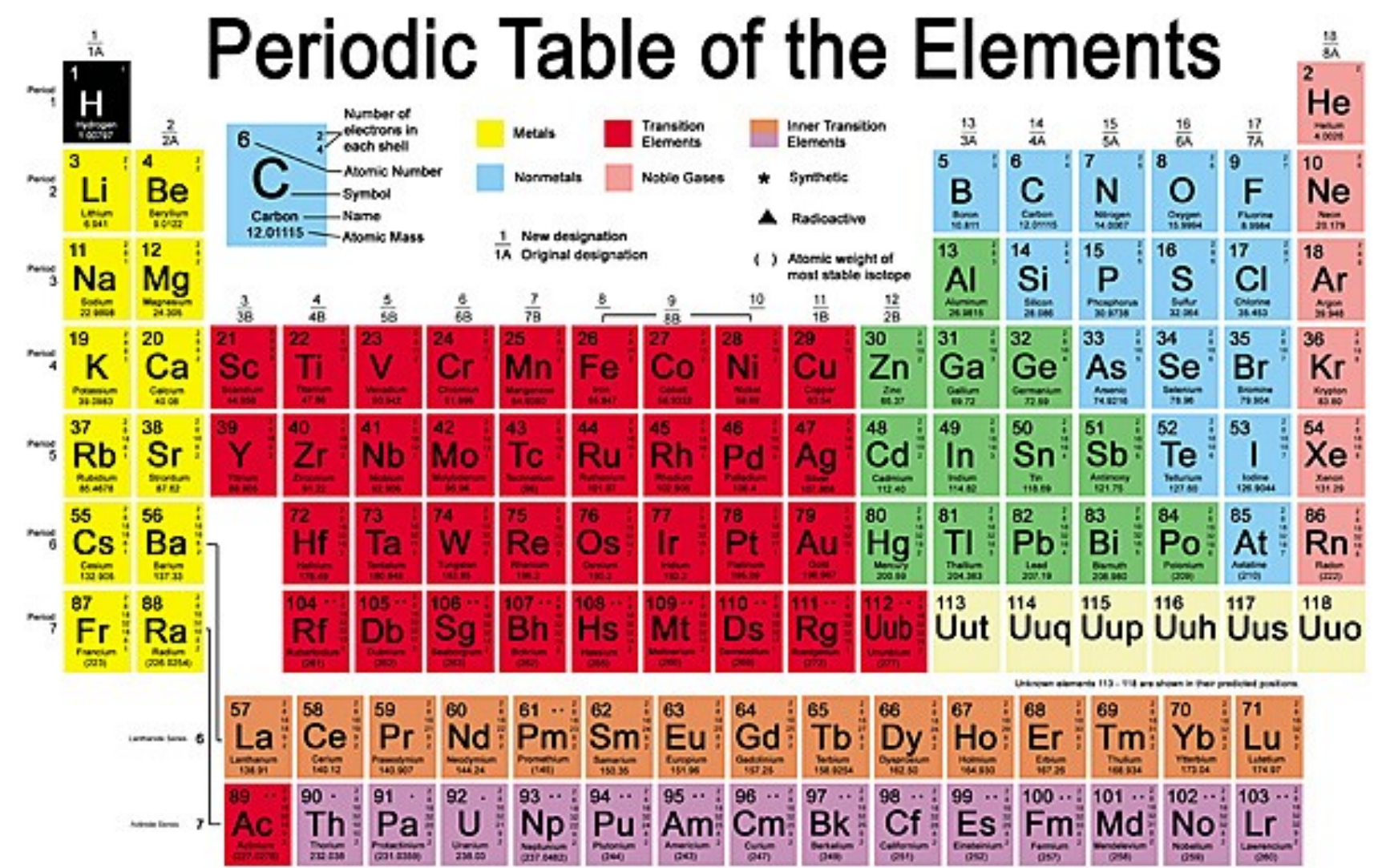
Creationists believe that roughly 6,000 - 10, 000 years ago, god created the Universe and Earth in 6 days and rested on the 7th day, thus Sunday. Creationists also believe in biogenesis—that only living organisms can create other living organisms. Creationists point to the Periodic Table of the Elements, in which all the elements that make up the Universe are inorganic (not living matter, not biological). Therefore, if everything in the Universe is made of inorganic elements, how did organic (biological) life originate from lifeless matter? Creationists also point to the astounding large odds to dismiss the theory of entropy (randomness). Creationists also point to the “missing link” in the theory of evolution—if humans evolved from apes, then why are apes still around?

entropy

decay, breakup, randomness, degeneration, disorder

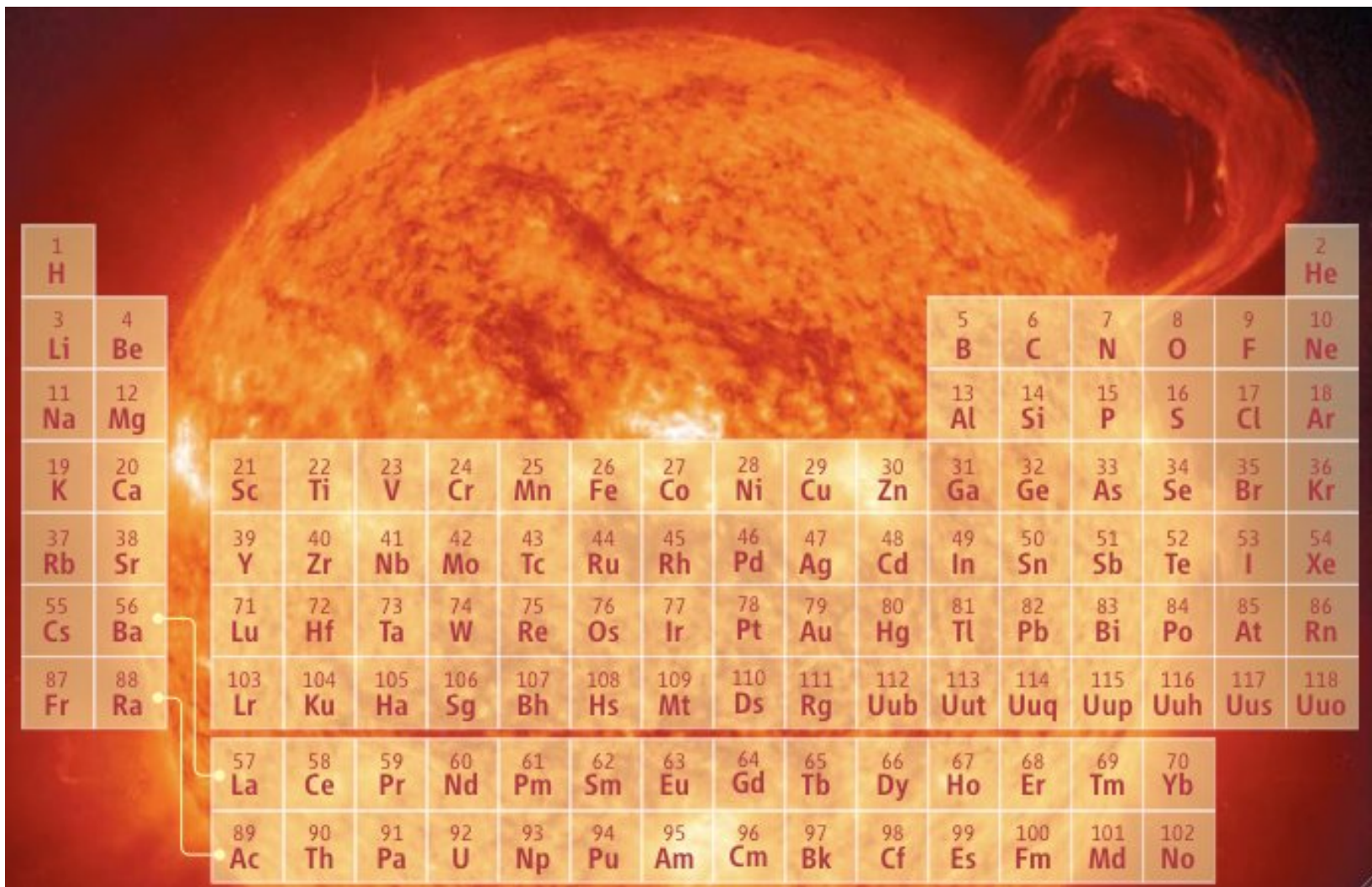
- 1. In thermodynamics, entropy (usual symbol S) is a measure of the number of specific ways in which a thermodynamic system may be arranged, commonly understood as a measure of disorder.
- 2. The tendency of a system that is left to itself to descend into chaos; uncountable.

Note the Periodic Table of the Elements below. It is believed that everything in the cosmos, including humans, is made of the elements listed below. Elements, such as hydrogen and oxygen, are made of atoms; which in turn are made of electrons, protons, and neutrons; which in turn are made of quarks; which in turn are made of the Higgs Boson elemental particle, or particles. For example, the content of the Sun is 71% hydrogen (H) and 27.1% helium (He). In the fantastically hot furnace of the Sun’ core, hy-



drogen and helium (both elements) are fused into heavier elements, such as oxygen(O), carbon(C), nitrogen(N), silicon(Si), magnesium(Mg), neon(Ne), sulfur(S), and iron(Fe). This is an example of how small things become big things in an entropic system, and how simple things become complex things.

When a star, such as our Sun, explodes (supervnova, dies), it gets unimaginably hot and in the process, heavier elements are created, giving birth to asteroids, moons, plan-

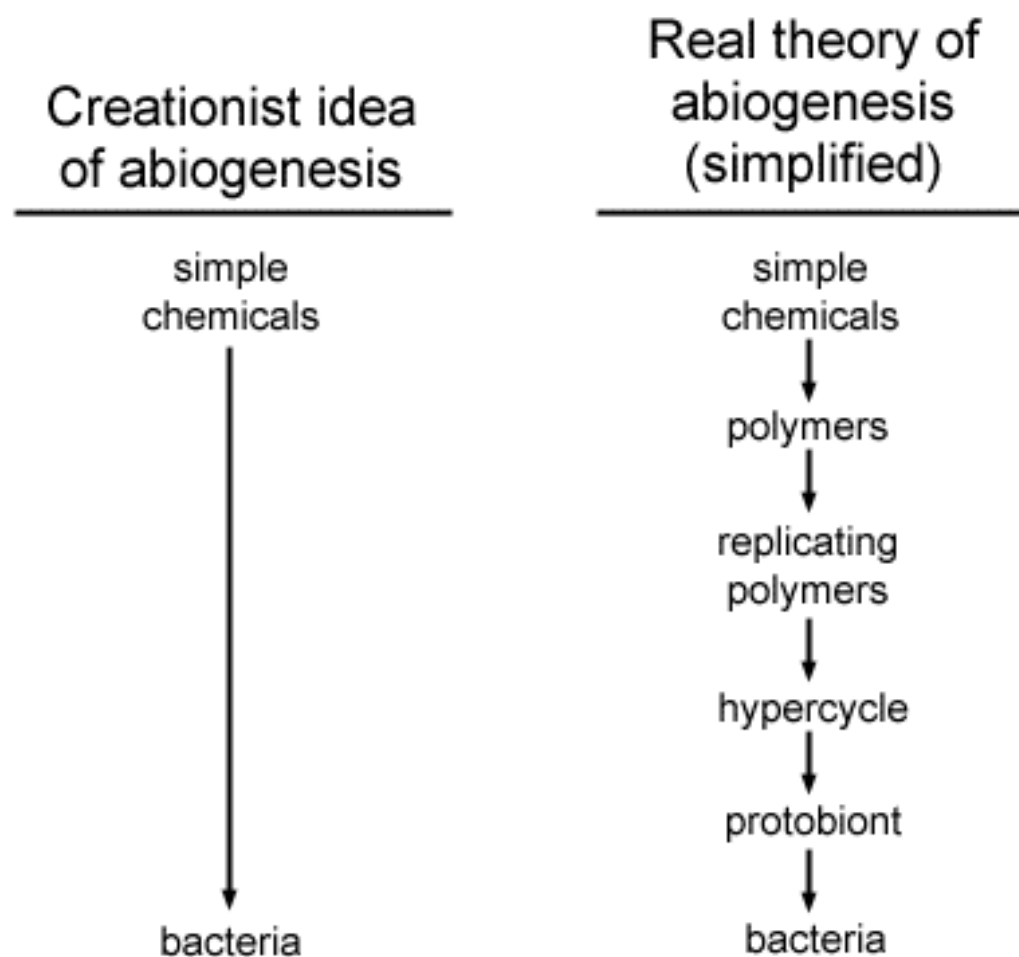


ets, and sometimes new stars. From the inner workings of the Sun, we see a common pattern: given enough time and with the right energy and condition, smaller things become bigger things and simple things become complex things.

However, if everything in the cosmos is made of inorganic elements, how is it possible that biological lifeforms such as plants and humans originated from those lifeless matter? This is the abiogenesis versus biogenesis debate. Creationists believe in biogenesis—that only organic organisms can give life to other organic organisms.

Again, when small things are left alone, with enough time, energy, and entropy working for them, small things become bigger, complex things. Small things amalgamate,

fuse, rearrange, synthesize, and even reproduce. For example, a common compound is water (H₂O), which is made of two elements: hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O).



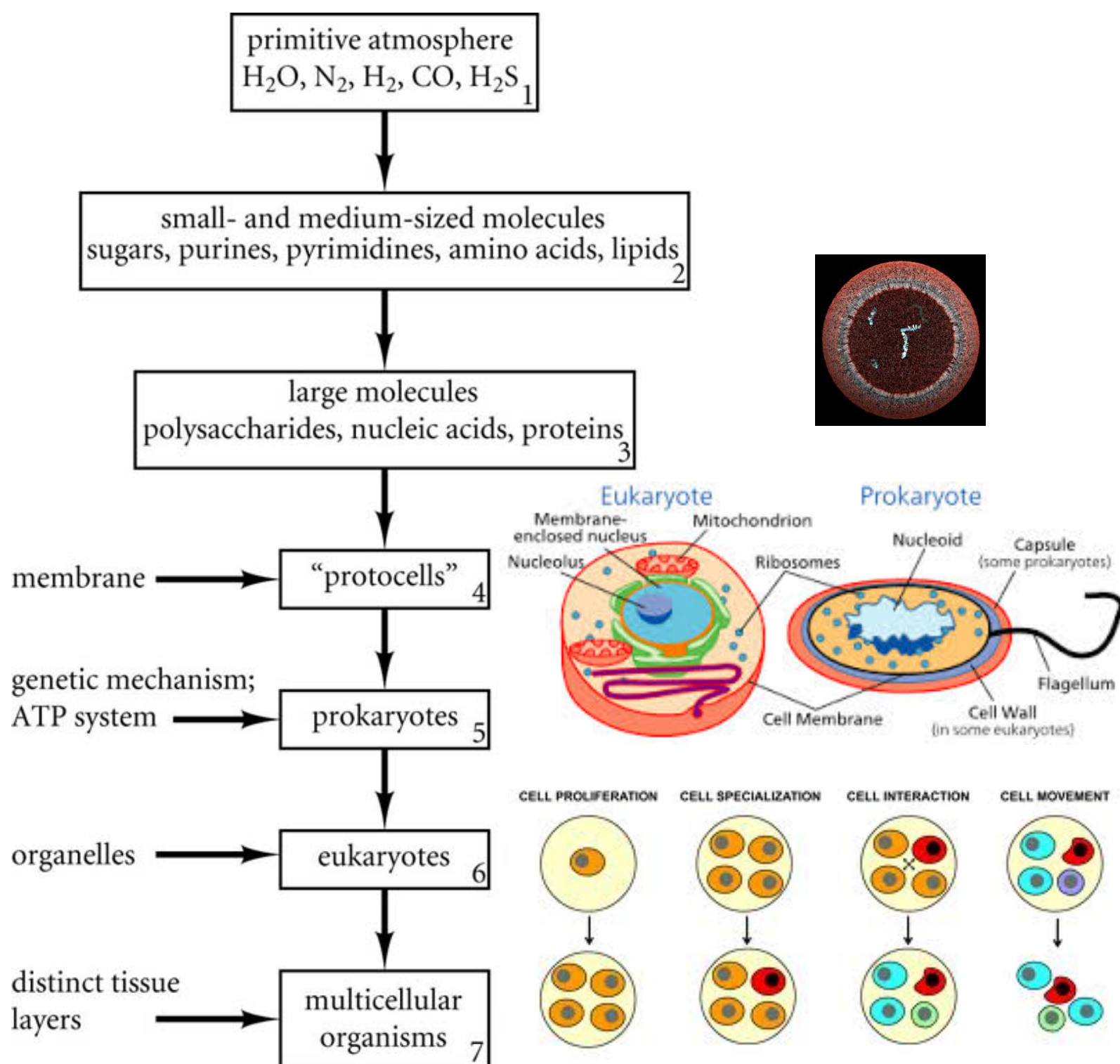
We are infinitesimally small in the infinitely massive cosmos. Our concept of time is in days, weeks, months, and decades—any period longer than eight decades is history to most of us. This is how eighty years looks like: 80 years. Now, imagine 3.55 billion years, or 4.55 billion years, or 13.7 billion years:

- 80 years (average lifespan of many humans)
- 3, 550, 000, 000 years (estimated age of first organic, multicellular organism)
- 4, 550, 000, 000 years (age of Earth)
- 13, 780, 000, 000 years (age of Universe)

We have no personal point of reference or any way to comprehend the staggering expanse of “billions” of years. We only say the billions as a number with a decimal. But behind those billions of years are the processes of entropy and abiogenesis at work. Then add **energy** from radiation, lightning, volcanic eruption, or other energy sources and we have the blueprint for our genetic material.

With enough time, elements amalgamate into simple-inorganic compounds, simple compounds into complex compounds; when energy is added, inorganic compounds turn into organic compounds, organic compounds into molecules, molecules into cells, cells into microbes; microbes and cells into tissues, tissues into organs, organs into multiple organs; into small species, and eventually into humans. It is estimated that the human body has about 100 trillion cells, which varies depending on the mass of the person.

Just like the Sun is comprised of smaller parts, the human body is also comprised of smaller parts. These smaller parts of the Sun and the human body have their beginnings from the Periodical Table of the Elements. And with the blessing of time, entropy, and energy, those elements evolved to form complex, organic matter.



Darwin's Theory Of Evolution—The Premise



Darwin's Theory of Evolution is the widely held notion that all life is related and has descended from a common ancestor: the birds and the bananas, the fishes and the flowers—all related. Darwin's general theory presumes the development of life from non-life and stresses a purely naturalistic (undirected) “descent with modification”. That is, complex creatures evolve from more simplistic ancestors naturally over time. In a nutshell, as random genetic mutations occur within an organism's genetic code, the beneficial mutations are preserved because they aid survival—a process known as “natural selection.” These beneficial mutations are passed on to the next generation. Over time, beneficial mutations accumulate and the result is an entirely different organism (not just a variation of the original, but an entirely different creature). —www.darwins-theory-of-evolution.com

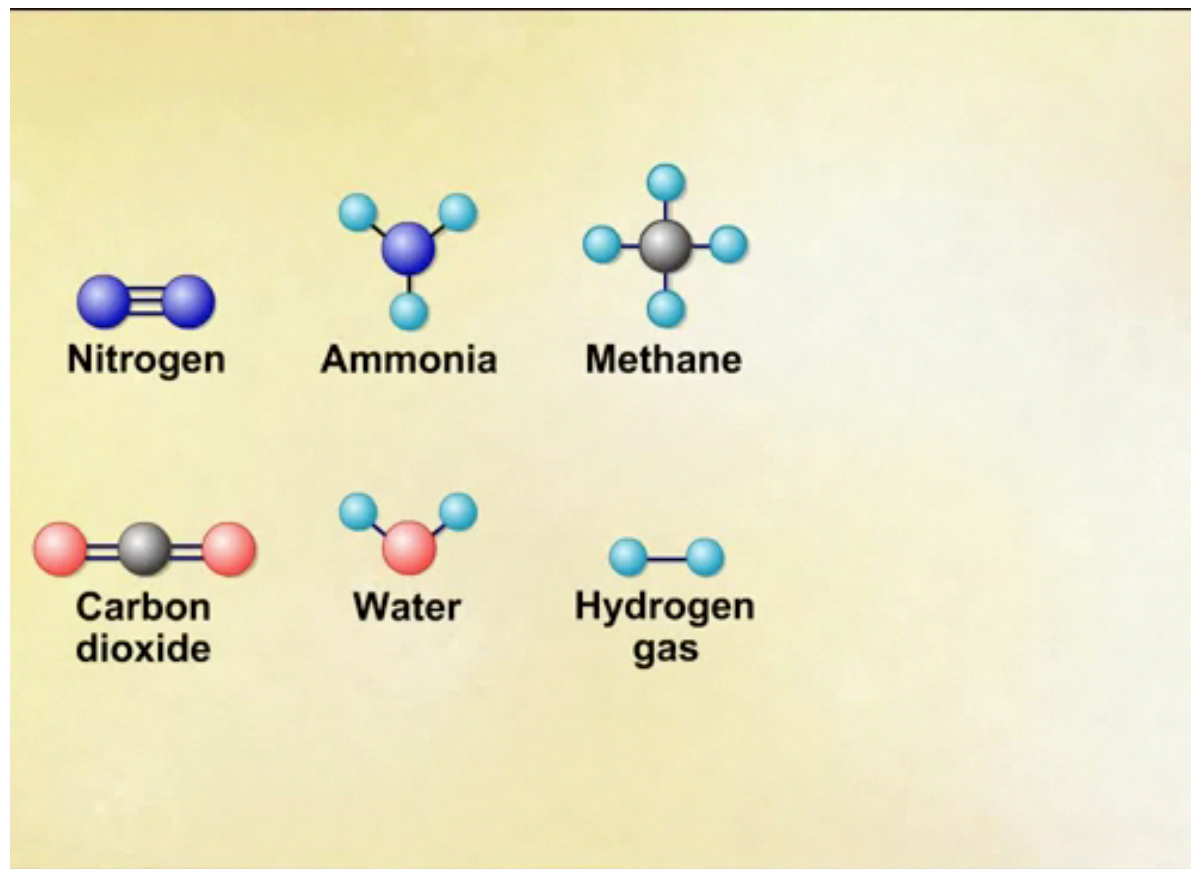
The Missing Link

Creationists point to a perceived flaw in Darwin's theory of evolution: If humans evolved from apes, then why are apes still around? Darwin's theory postulates that humans shared a common ancestor as apes—we did not directly evolve from apes. Therefore, there is no missing link.

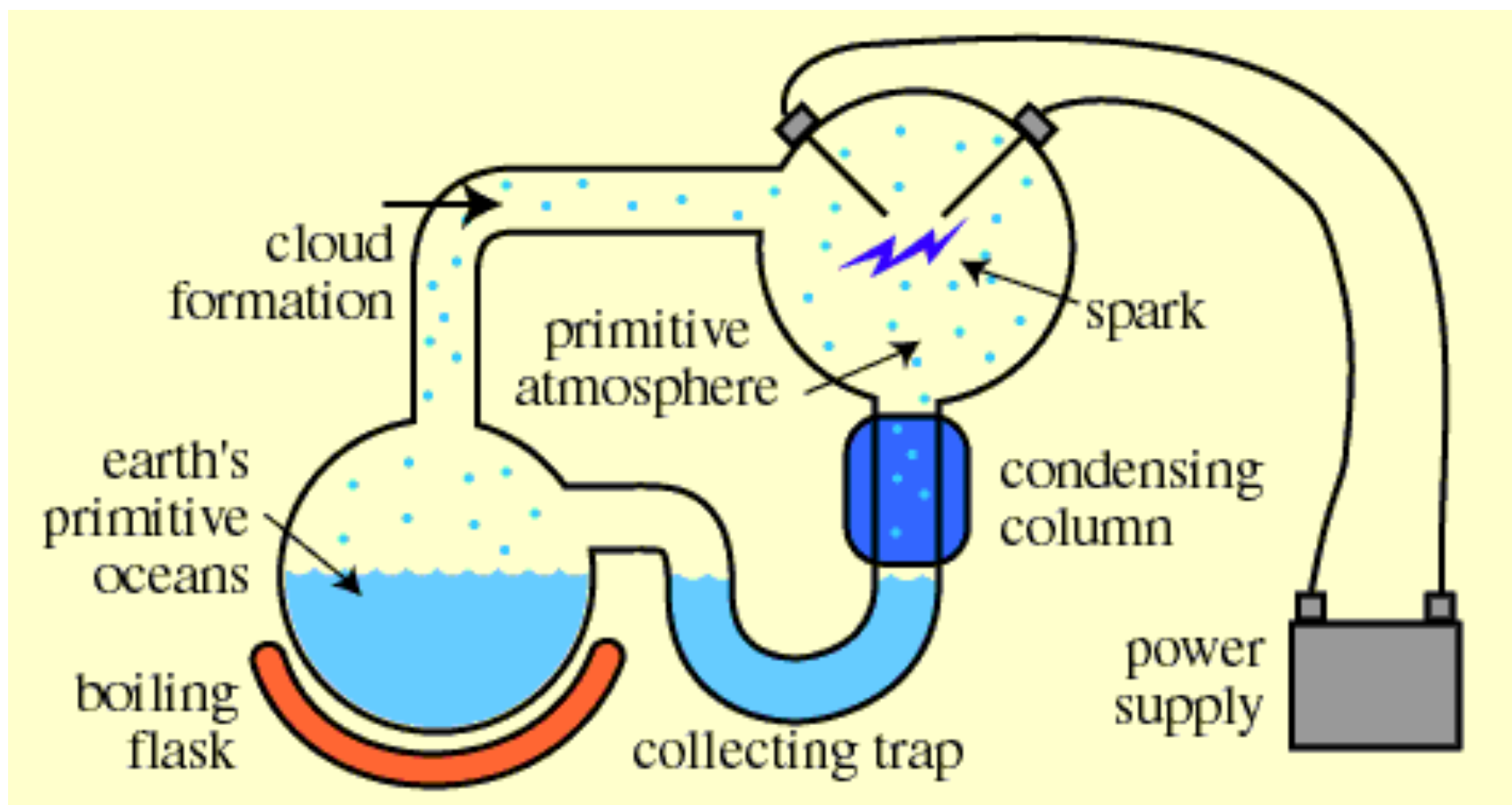
The God Dilemma

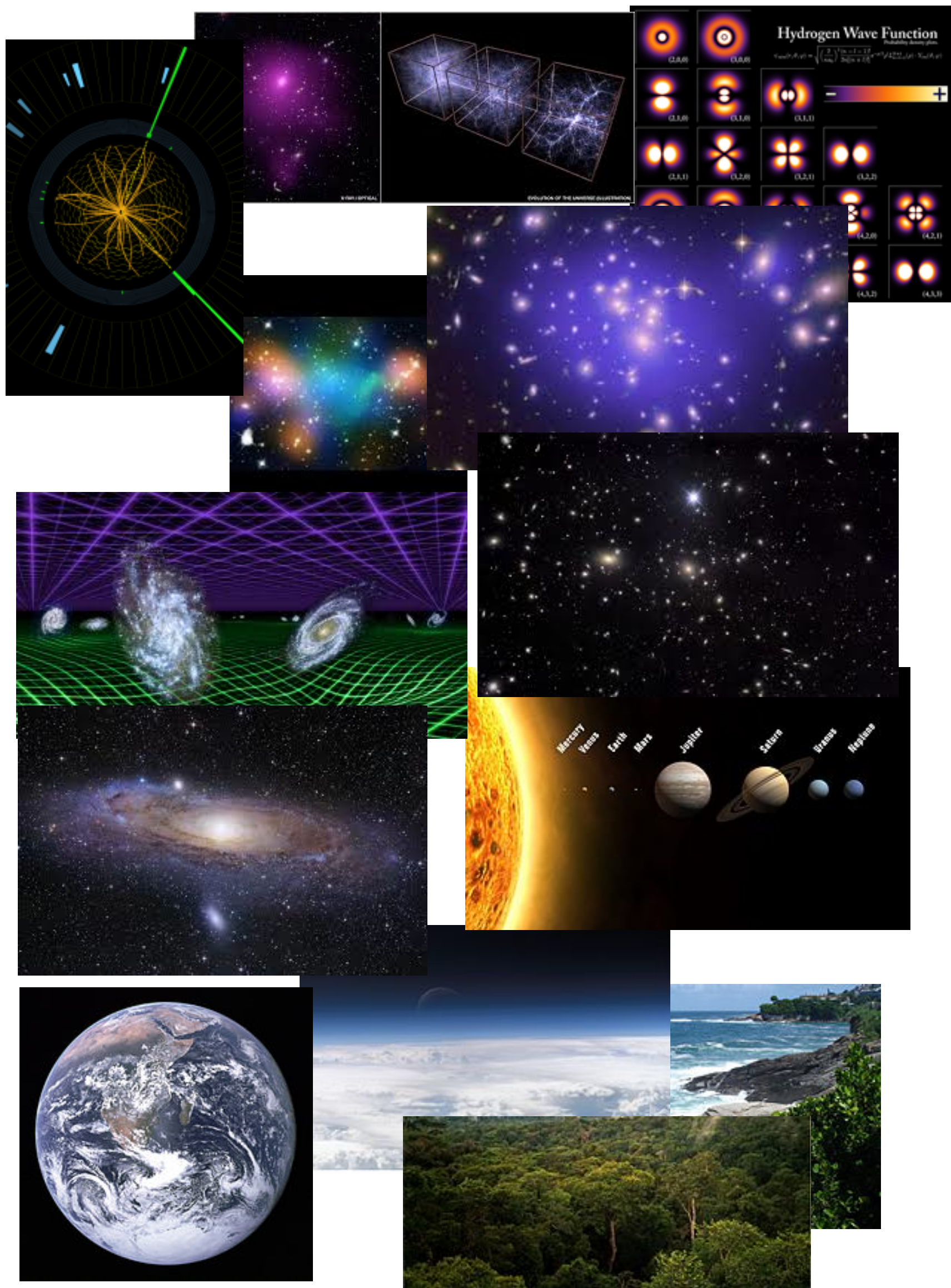
We are infinitesimally small in an unimaginably massive cosmos. If there were a god, it would have to be bigger than unimaginably big to have created the Universe and everything in it. If there were a god in this staggering immensity of existence, who is arrogant or delusional enough to think that god would care for her or him? This god, or intelligent designer, would have to be incomprehensibly powerful and its domain so immeasurably vast, that it would not care what we thought of it either way.

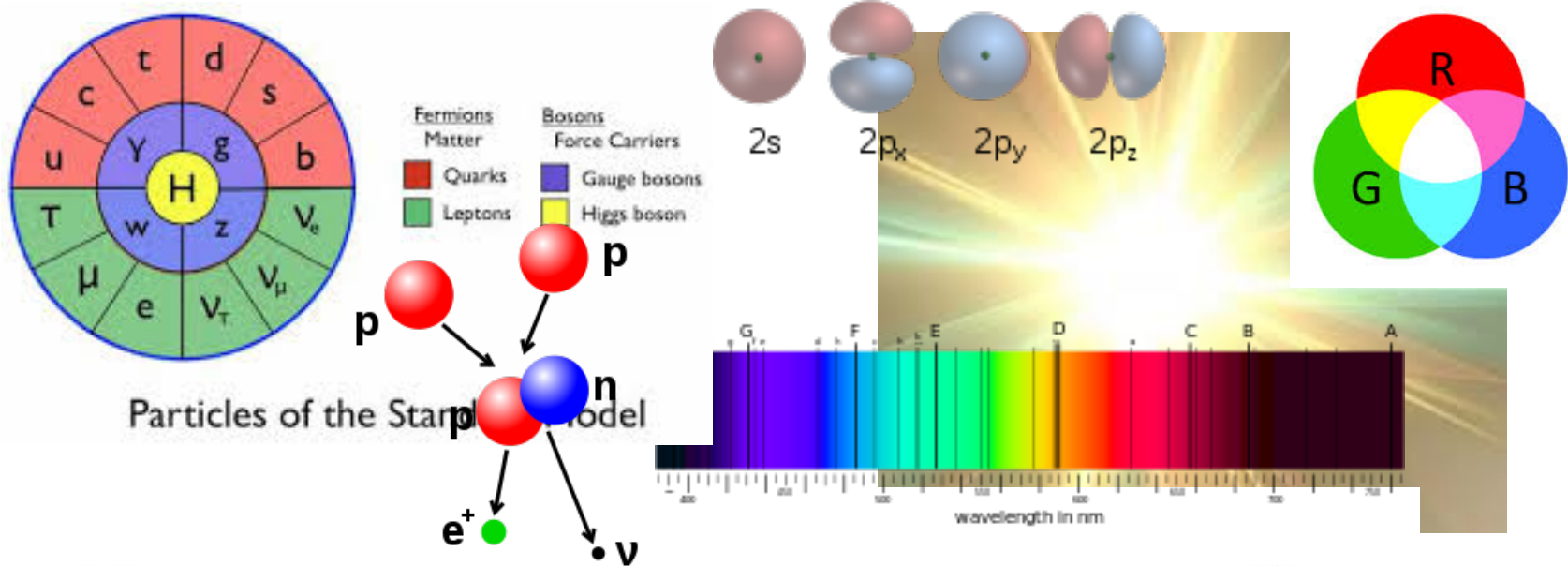
Video: Urey-Miller Experiment, 1953



Turning the inorganic into the organic. Video courtesy of Dr. Prodigious HD Animations.







Periodic Table of the Elements

atomic number
white text = gas state at 0 °C
chemical symbol
chemical name
standard atomic weight
(lower - upper bounds
(lowest) no stable isotopes)

Element Categories

actinoids
alkali metals
alkaline metals
transition metals
lanthanoids
metalloids
nonmetals
halogens
noble gases
unknown elements

Electron Configuration Blocks

s
d
p
f

GROUP	1	2											13	14	15	16	17	18	PERIOD	
1	1 H hydrogen [1.007 - 1.009]																	2 He helium 4.003	1	
2	3 Li lithium [6.938 - 6.997]	4 Be beryllium 9.012											5 B boron [10.80 - 10.83]	6 C carbon [12.00 - 12.01]	7 N nitrogen [14.00 - 14.01]	8 O oxygen [15.99 - 16.00]	9 F fluorine 18.99	10 Ne neon 20.18	2	
3	11 Na sodium 22.99	12 Mg magnesium 24.31											13 Al aluminium 26.98	14 Si silicon [28.08 - 28.09]	15 P phosphorus 30.97	16 S sulfur [32.05 - 32.06]	17 Cl chlorine [35.44 - 35.46]	18 Ar argon 39.95	3	
4	19 K potassium 39.10	20 Ca calcium 40.08	21 Sc scandium 44.96	22 Ti titanium 47.87	23 V vanadium 50.94	24 Cr chromium 52.00	25 Mn manganese 54.94	26 Fe iron 55.85	27 Co cobalt 58.93	28 Ni nickel 58.69	29 Cu copper 63.55	30 Zn zinc 65.38	31 Ga gallium 69.72	32 Ge germanium 72.63	33 As arsenic 74.92	34 Se selenium 78.96	35 Br bromine 79.90	36 Kr krypton 83.80	4	
5	37 Rb rubidium 85.47	38 Sr strontium 87.62	39 Y yttrium 88.91	40 Zr zirconium 91.22	41 Nb niobium 92.91	42 Mo molybdenum 95.94	43 Tc technetium (98)	44 Ru ruthenium 101.1	45 Rh rhodium 102.9	46 Pd palladium 106.4	47 Ag silver 107.9	48 Cd cadmium 112.4	49 In indium 114.8	50 Sn tin 118.7	51 Sb antimony 121.8	52 Te tellurium 127.6	53 I iodine 126.9	54 Xe xenon 131.3	5	
6	55 Cs cesium 132.9	56 Ba barium 137.3	57-71 lanthanoids		72 Hf hafnium 178.5	73 Ta tantalum 180.9	74 W tungsten 183.8	75 Re rhenium 186.2	76 Os osmium 190.2	77 Ir iridium 192.2	78 Pt platinum 195.1	79 Au gold 197.0	80 Hg mercury 200.6	81 Tl thallium [204.3 - 204.4]	82 Pb lead 207.2	83 Bi bismuth 208.9	84 Po polonium (209)	85 At astatine (210)	86 Rn radon (222)	6
7	87 Fr francium (223)	88 Ra radium (226)	89-103 actinoids		104 Rf rutherfordium (261)	105 Db dubnium (262)	106 Sg seaborgium (266)	107 Bh bohrium (264)	108 Hs hassium (277)	109 Mt meitnerium (268)	110 Ds darmstadtium (271)	111 Rg roentgenium (272)	112 Cn copernicium (285)	113 Uut Ununtrium (284)	114 Uuq Ununquadium (289)	115 Uup Ununpentium (288)	116 Uuh Ununhexium (292)	117 Uus Ununseptium (294)	118 Uuo Ununoctium (294)	7

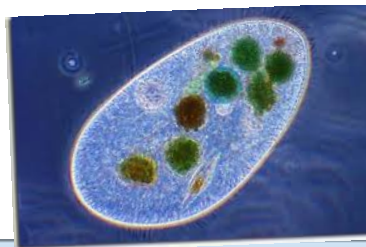
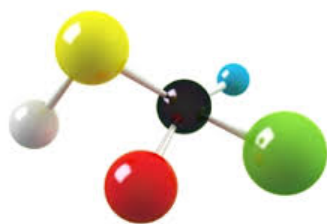
Natural Occurrence

primordial

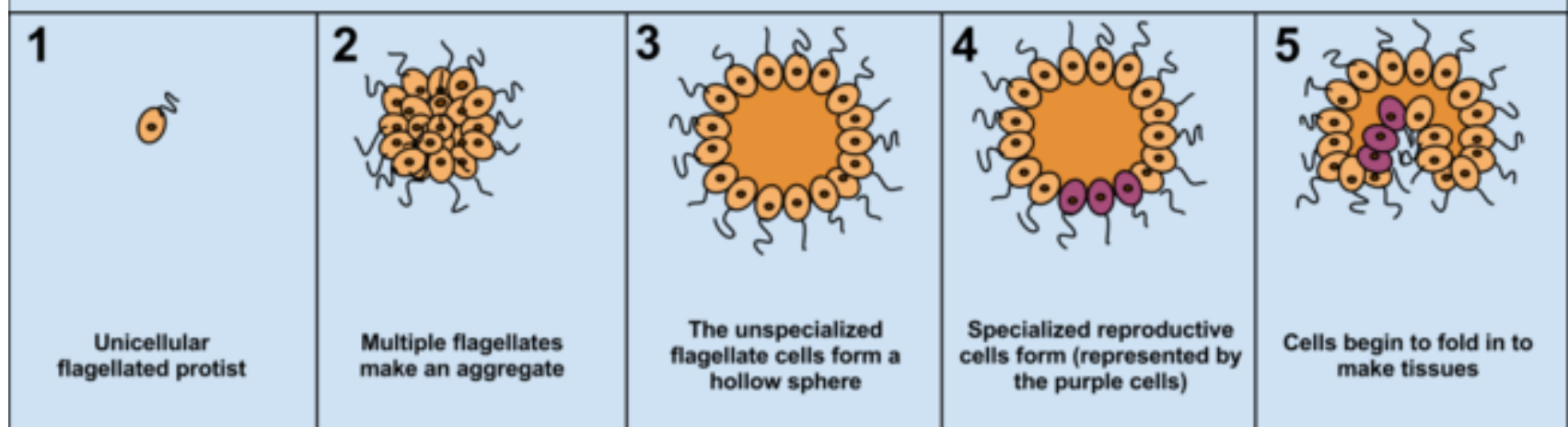
from decay

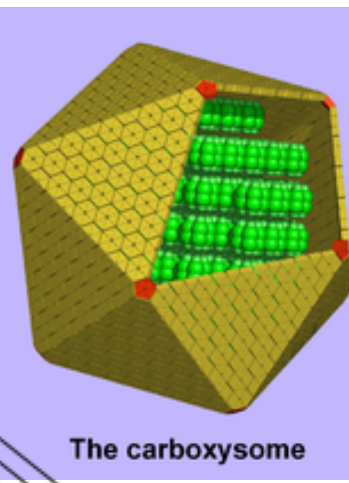
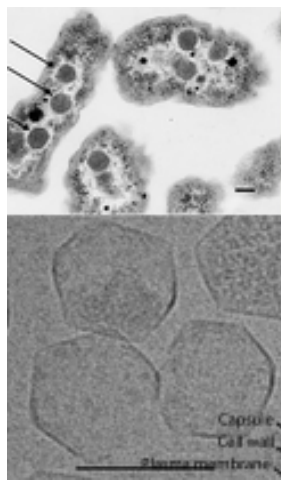
synthetic

57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71
La lanthanum 138.9	Ce cerium 140.1	Pr praseodymium 140.9	Nd neodymium 144.2	Pm promethium (145)	Sm samarium 150.4	Eu europium 152.0	Gd gadolinium 157.3	Tb terbium 158.9	Dy dysprosium 162.5	Ho holmium 164.9	Er erbium 167.3	Tm thulium 168.9	Yb ytterbium 173.1	Lu lutetium 175.0
89 Ac actinium (227)	90 Th thorium 232.0	91 Pa protactinium 231.0	92 U uranium 238.0	93 Np neptunium (237)	94 Pu plutonium (244)	95 Am americium (243)	96 Cm curium (247)	97 Bk berkelium (247)	98 Cf californium (251)	99 Es einsteinium (252)	100 Fm fermium (257)	101 Md mendelevium (258)	102 No nobelium (259)	103 Lr lawrencium (262)



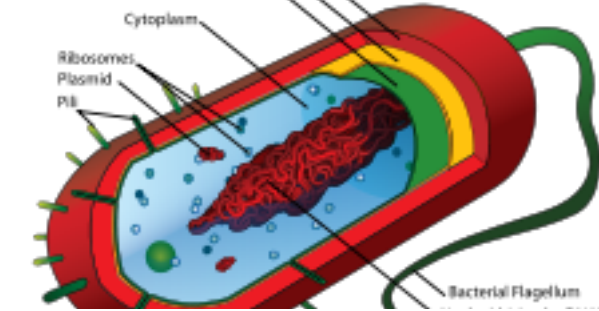
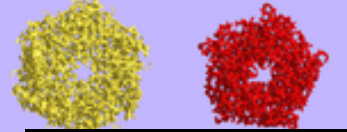
Colonial Flagellate Hypothesis



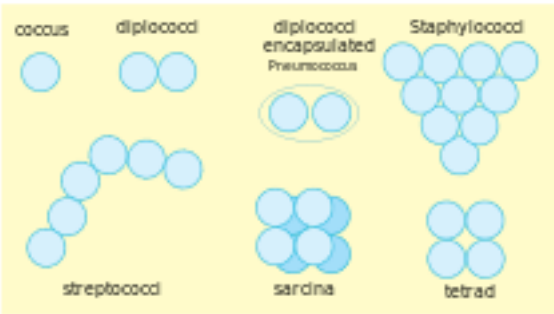


Enzymes and shell proteins

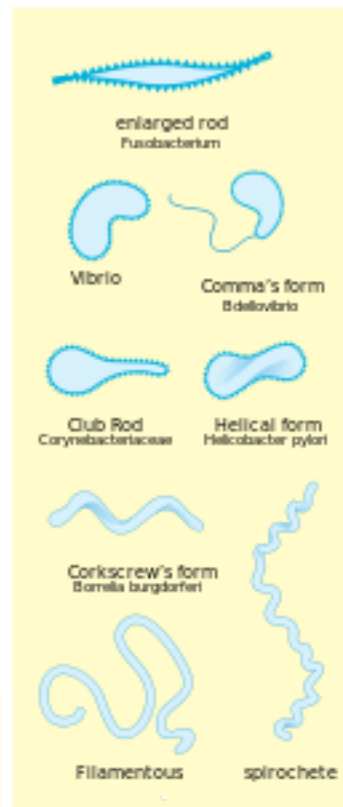
RuBisCO



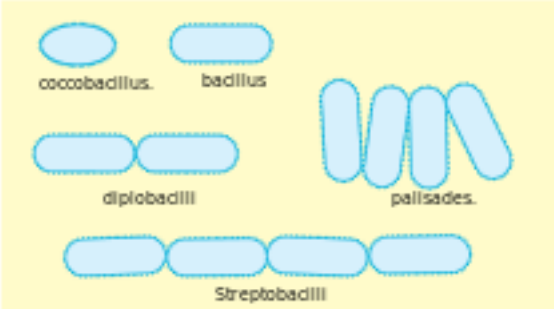
Cocci



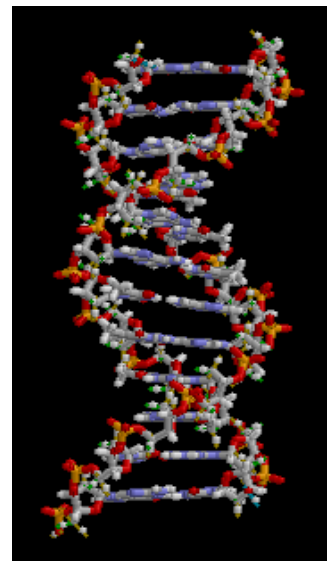
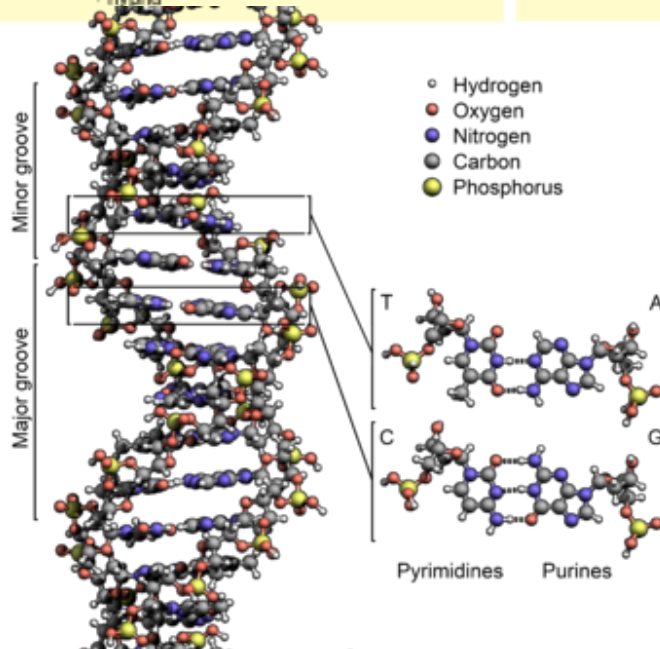
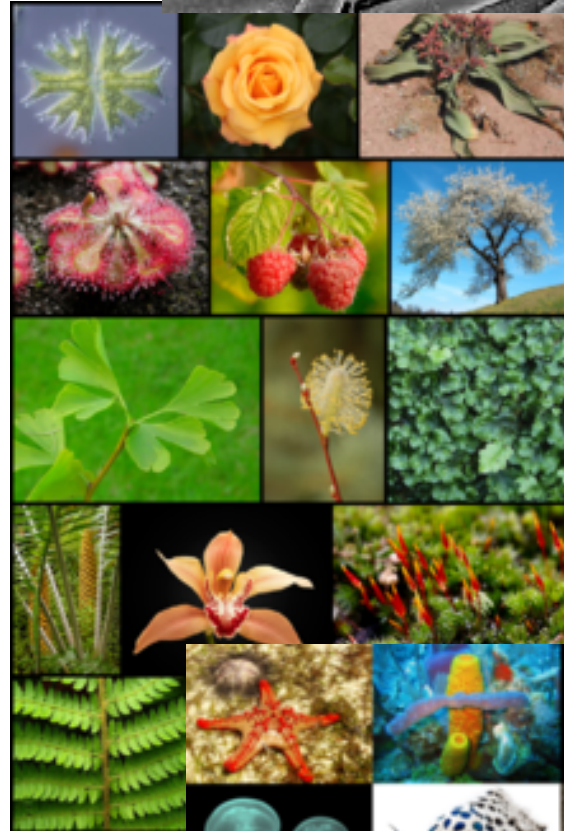
Others



Bacilli



Budding and appendaged bacteria





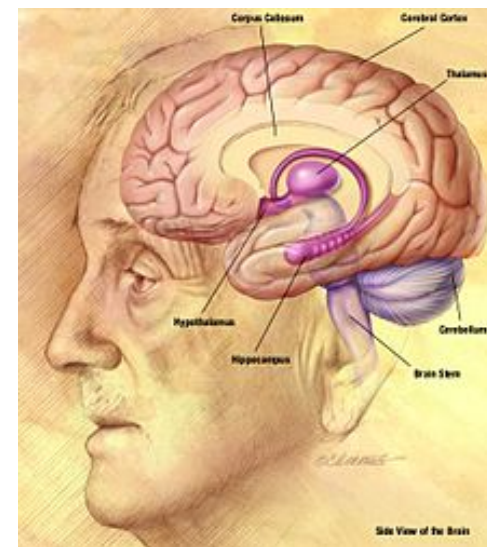
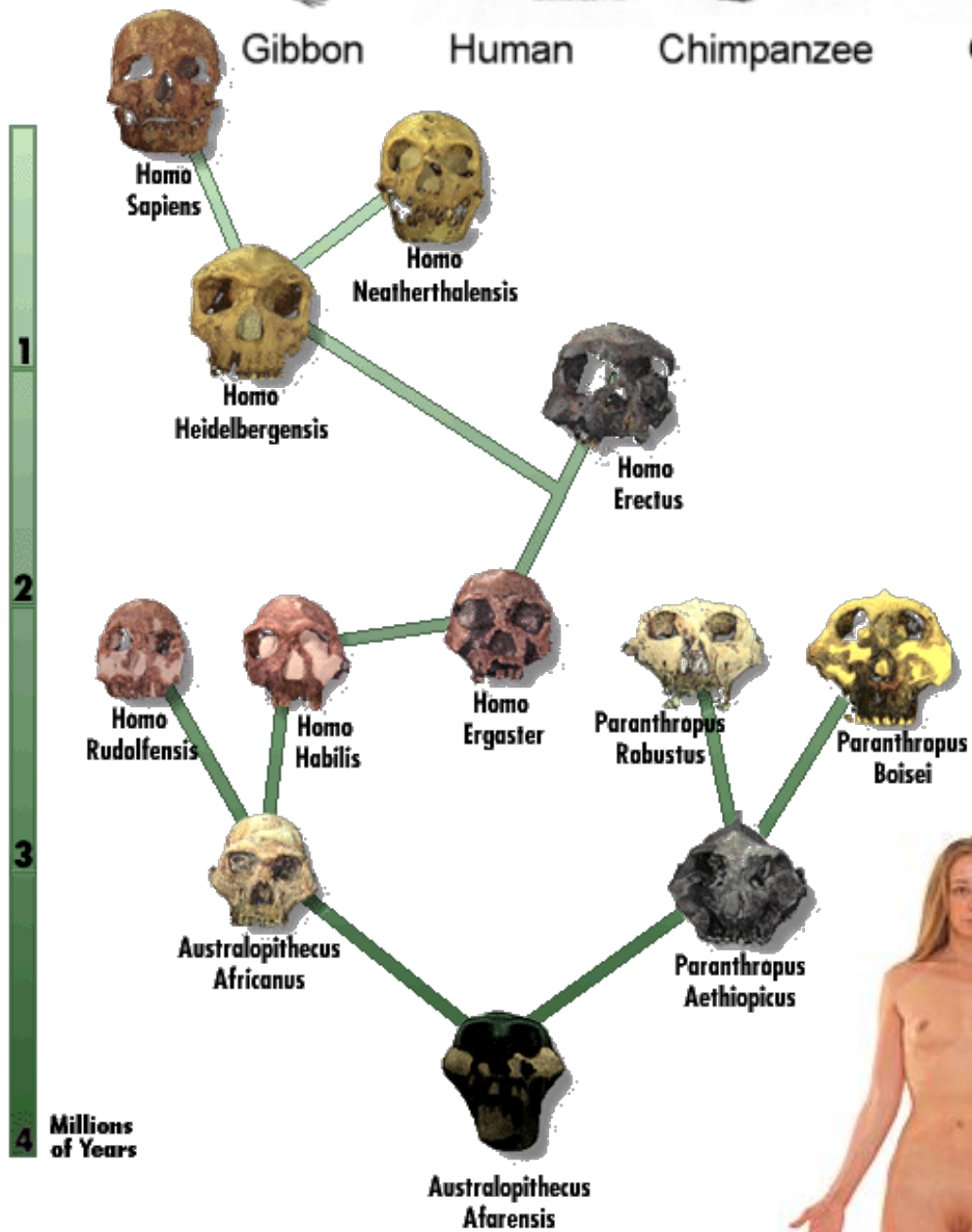
Gibbon

Human

Chimpanzee

Gorilla

Orangutan



THE PALE BLUE DOT

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great
enveloping cosmic dark...

Consider again that dot.

That's here.

That's home.

That's us.

On it everyone you love,
everyone you know,
everyone you ever heard of,
every human being who ever was,
lived out their lives.

The aggregate of our joy and suffering,
thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines,
every hunter and forager,
every hero and coward,
every creator and destroyer of civilization,
every king and peasant,
every young couple in love,
every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer,
every teacher of morals,
every corrupt politician,
every "superstar,"
every "supreme leader,"
every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there—

on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.



Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot.

Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner.

How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark.

In our obscurity—in all this vastness—there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world known, so far, to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment,

the Earth is where we make our stand.



Carl Sagan

HUMANITY

NATURALOPY

CELEBRATING HUMANITY

Nature favours diversity to ensure the propagation of her creations; Humanity would be wise to also favour diversity when adopting knowledge. Although diverse and in silos, the foundation for our moral guidelines and belief system have been formulated by Humans before us and those still with us. There is no need to attribute to the gods what Humanity has accomplished. The Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past once believed in gods. However, their faith did not save their civilizations.

If we are to co-exist, live peacefully, and advance together as a species, we need to abandon our gods, because fables and science are incompatible.

Since time immemorial, our ancestors have conjured ingenious myths and fables to explain the six primary metaphysical questions of existence (the BIG questions):

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

Independently, for millennia, in different continents of the world, small groups of men congregated and concluded that humans could not adequately answer these existential

questions. Therefore, due to our ancestors's limited knowledge of the physical world at the time, they used their brilliant imagination. The answers to these pressing questions were deferred to a higher power, an omnipotent figure or a group of them—god or gods. Within each region of the world, ideas were borrowed and passed down from one religion to another, and as a result of empire building, several religions crossed continents and became pervasive in daily life.

As we are still witnessing, due to perpetual conflict, religion is extremely intrusive and problematic on a global scale. The Jews are still fighting Muslims in Israel-Palestine; Jews and Christians are often at loggerheads; Muslim sects are fighting each other throughout the Middle East; Christians are occupying Muslim countries; and Muslims are persecuting Christians in certain parts of the Middle East. It's a quagmire of hate, and this pattern of hate continues despite the fact that Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are all Abrahamic religions—they share the same root. Each one espouses peace as a central tenet of its religion, but we know it is very different in practice.

The inconsistencies, contradictions, and absurdities of every major religion are so glaring and abundant that it would take an encyclopedia to distill, and even chaff.

Three Religions, One Root, Dozens of Denominations, Countless Interpretations...In Perpetual conflict

First, take the Christians. The Christians believe in the Old Testament and the New Testament bibles, but do not believe in the Torah (Jewish holy book) or Quran (Muslim holy book). Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent by god himself to deliver men from their sins. In the Holy Trinity (conceptualized by Theophilus of Antioch, 412 AD.), Christians believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, and God himself—a 3 for 1 special. The Christian Holy Bible has been translated and re-interpreted several dozen times; therefore, no one knows how different it really is from the original text, if one did exist.

The Christians have been been waiting for over 2,000 years for the second coming of their prophet, Jesus Christ.

500 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

1000 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

1500 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

2000 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

The Kingdom of Heaven is never upon us, for one strange reason or another.

Second, take the Jews. The Jews believe in the Old Testament and the Torah, but not the New Testament nor the Quran nor Jesus Christ. The Jews believe Jesus Christ and Muhammad were false prophets. The Jews also believe that they are the Chosen People of god and have been waiting over 5,000 years for their Messiah to appear on Earth. For reasons not generally agreed upon, the Jews have been the most persecuted people in all of Humanity.

Third, take the Muslims. The Muslims believe in every Abrahamic holy book: Old Testament, New Testament (Holy Bible), Torah, and especially Islam's Quran. They also believe in all the Abrahamic prophets and messengers, such as Noah, Moses, Daniel, Elijah, Jesus Christ, and particularly Muhammad. Muslims believe that Muhammed was a prophet and a Messenger of God. Essentially, the Islamic religion is based on the account of one man who claimed he had received the words and will of god through the angel Gabriel. This is religious nuttury at its finest.

The religious madness continues when all the sects (movements, denominations) of each major religion are taken into consideration. The confusion and obfuscation are endless since each group has subgroups (branches) with their own interpretation of the "holy" scriptures. As examples:

Christianity: Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Protestant, and so on.

Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructional, Hasidism, Kabbalah, and so on.

Islam: Ahmadiyya, Ibadi, Shia, Sufism, Sunni, Wahhabi, Nation of Islam, and so on.

If the word of god is final, then why is it so different? And why are there so many of them? And why do they utterly contradict each other? If we just skim the surface of religion, it would be reasonable to conclude that religion was created like TV channels:

at some point a group felt their interests were not being represented and decided to create a new channel (branch, denomination, sect, group). In this new channel, they concocted whatever they needed in order to attract and appease followers. As long as the sheep watched one channel, everything made sense, and considered divine and brilliant. However, as soon as the followers switched channels (self-education), nothing made sense anymore. There were inconsistencies, absurdities, and bull manure—piles and piles of it. Is it any wonder that the phrase “holy shit” is a cultural lexicon? However, we should applaud our ancestors for having wove brilliantly imaginative stories to explain the nature of existence.

Despite advances in communication, technology, education, and science, the moral guidelines and belief systems of most humans are still grounded in myths and fables. Like children reading fairy tale stories, these religious adherents believe *their* magical wizard exists. They cling to the absurd notion that their magical wizard has chosen them as its favourite children, to the exclusion of others—religion divides, Humanity unites. For these reasons, much of the strife and suffering in the world can be attributed to the divisive nature of religion.

Atavistic: characterized by reversion to something ancient or ancestral;
of a throwback or exhibiting primitivism.

Those who seek comfort in religion have an atavistic worldview—they hold onto the past because the present and future may be unpleasant for them, or they refuse to face the present and future. They refuse to let go and become objective in their worldview.

Religion: When we don't understand how the world works, make it up.

A sore point among the scientific community is that Abrahamic religions still teach their followers that the Universe and Earth were created 6,000 - 10,000 years ago by god, despite overwhelming scientific evidence against the assertion. Science has shown, using radiometric dating, geological stratigraphy, and helioseismic dating, that the Earth is roughly 4.55 billion years old. However, the generally accepted number among Christians is 6,000, and that figure was derived from counting successive generations since Adam and Eve in the Old Testament.

Miseducation is more dangerous than uneducation.

The Six Existential Questions of Life

There is ample, if not conclusive, evidence to support the theory of abiogenesis. In 1953, scientists Stanley Miller and Howard Urey demonstrated the process in which inorganic molecules mutated to complex organic molecules (amino acids, carbohydrates, nucleic acids) roughly 3.5 billion years ago, paving the way for biological life on Earth.

In 1956, using uranium-lead dating and lead-lead dating methods, geochemist Clair Patterson calculated that the Earth was roughly 4.55 billion years old. Even today, Dr. Patterson's estimate is considered accurate within 20-70 million years.

Recently, scientists have re-enacted the creation of our Universe, the Big Bang, in laboratories, particle accelerators, and computer simulations. The data from scientists working independently around the world places our Universe at roughly 13.7 billion years old. We also know from Nagasaki and Hiroshima that when an atom, invisible to the eyes, is split, it releases enough energy to start a chain reaction powerful enough to destroy a city. From these World War II events and our knowledge that mass and energy are interchangeable, we know that something infinitesimally small has the potential to become massively big under the right conditions—this is the awesome power of Nature.

The truth and answers to life are found in science and education, not in religion. Religion hampers our perspective and understanding of the world. Religion is miseducation. A devout religious person loses precious time; first by miseducation, then by re-education.

Let us ponder the primary existential questions of life, without involving religion.

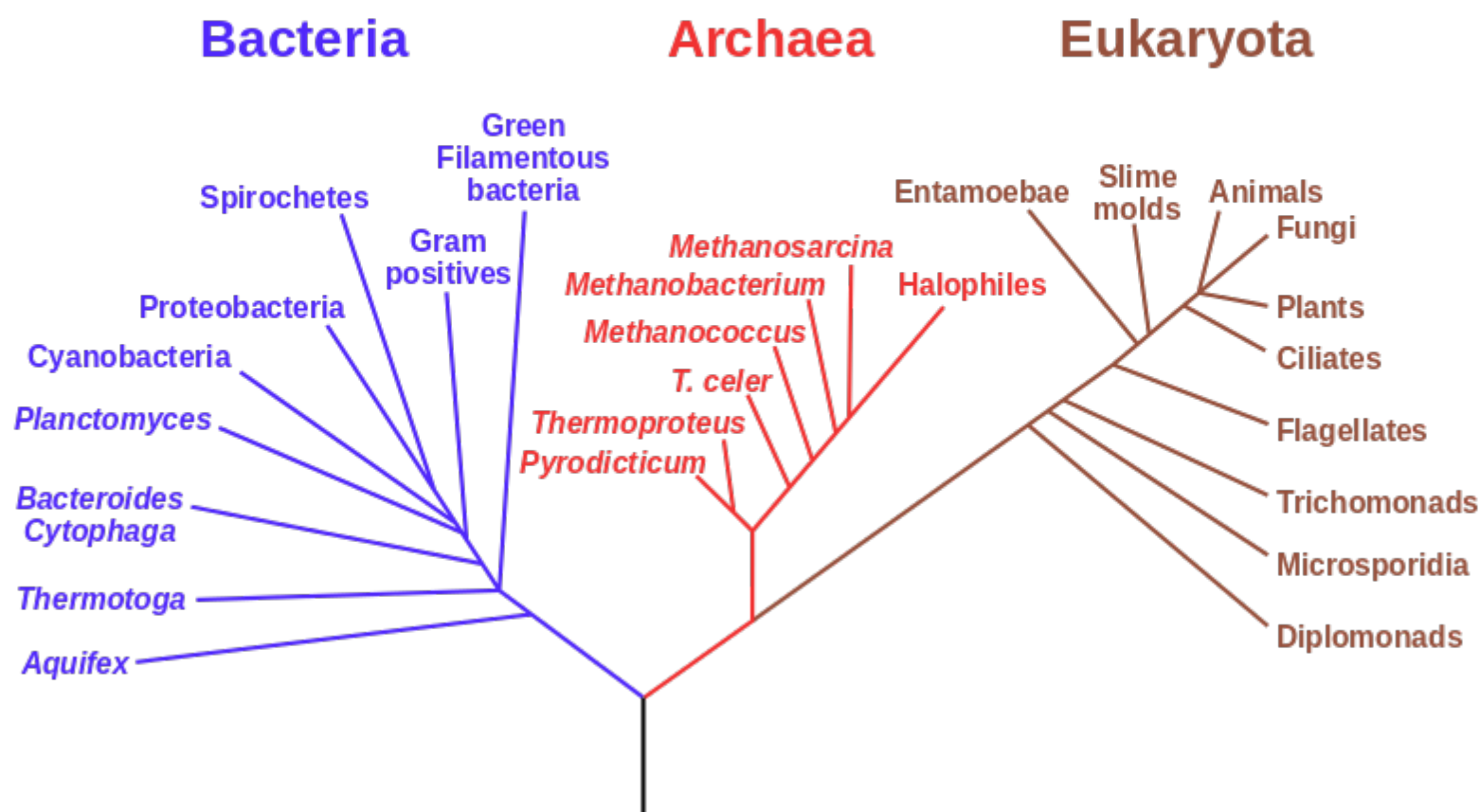
- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

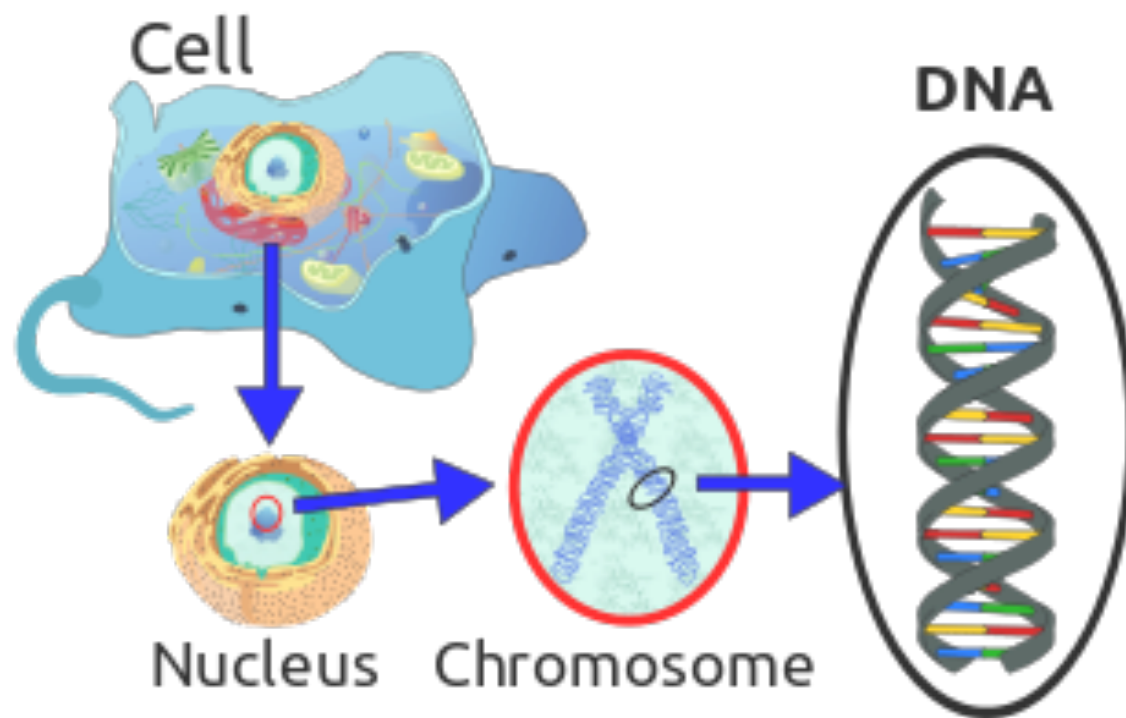
1. Where Did We Come From?

We are all powerful and extraordinary, for we were birthed by the stars. Nature created us through roughly 4.55 billion years of experimentation: from atoms; to chemical elements; to inorganic molecules; to complex-organic molecules; to single-celled organisms; to multicellular organisms of microbes and bacteria; to invertebrates, amphibians, fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammals; then the grand prize of evolution: Homo Sapiens, a thinking and reasoning animal atop the food chain, capable of the greatest vices and virtues.

We are constructed of the same elements as those in the stars: hydrogen, helium, oxygen, carbon, nitrogen, silicon, magnesium, neon, iron, and sulfur. The differences between the elements in our body and those in the Sun are the quantity, ratio, arrangement, and complexity—the fusion of the Sun’s lighter elements created heavier elements, then complex molecules in our body. This fact can be verified with electron microscopes, chemical analysis of our cells, spectral analysis, and carbon dating. We share a common ancestor with every living thing on this planet—the spiritualists knew this without requiring scientific evidence when they stated that “everything is connected to everything else.”

Phylogenetic Tree of Life





The average human body is comprised of roughly 100 trillion cells, each evolved over 3.5 billion years to perform a special function in a specific organ. Contrary to popular belief, humans did not evolve from apes—we share a common ancestor with them, just like we share a common ancestry with a butterfly, tree, lion, flower, and every organism on this Earth. Therefore, there is no “missing link” in Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Whether biological life began on Earth in the ashes of underwater volcanoes or bacteria from asteroids (meteors) or on the surface of oceans, it began very small as microbes, then amalgamated and evolved from there to bigger organisms.



2. What Is Our Purpose In Life?

At the universal level, there is a shared baseline for the purpose of life: eat well, sleep well, mingle well, work well, and enjoy life. Every single study on happiness has shown that our connection to our community is one of the most— many times the most—important factor in how happy we are. Our contribution to our community and connection to Nature form the foundation of happiness and purpose.

At the individual level, the purpose of life is different from person to person. That is, the meaning of life varies depending on the person. It has been said that when we find our passion, we find our purpose. However, history has shown that the most purposeful and remembered lives are those who served Humanity—those who lit the path with glowing lights to show others the way. Their spirits are in this book.

The people who have found their purpose in life share some traits: they went through periods of trial and error before finally deciding what they were good at; they had failed before they succeeded; they enjoy what they do; they feel no need to defend what they do; they view what they do as a passion, not as work or a career; they feel what they do makes a difference in the lives of others; and they give back to their community.

If each and every day of our life, we do something productive that fills our waking hours, that is purpose enough. It will leave the world a better place than we found it.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “The purpose of life is not to find yourself, but to *create* yourself.”

The meaning and purpose of life are covered more in depth in Precept 7: Purpose.

3. Why Do Bad Things Happen To Us?

Bad things happen to us for the same reason good things happen to us: the choices we make. The choices we make in life are cumulative and eventually end in consequence. When we made bad decisions, we were either ignorant of the repercussion or had a subconscious desire for the outcome. Summarily, good or bad things happen according to karma—the law of cause and effect. What goes around, comes around.

Of course there are exceptions to this karmic balance; two notable exceptions are natural disasters and children. When children, vulnerable and impressionable, are inflicted with suffering or evil, it is because they are dependent on their parents or caretakers, thus the child's karma is inherited. Or in reverse, parents are punished through the suffering of their children. Just like children who benefit from their parents's skillful deeds, so do children suffer from their parents's unskillful deeds. Our deeds affect us and those we care about. Only when children become emotionally independent and self-sufficient are they responsible for their own karma.

We reap what we sow.

4. Is There A God?

No.

At least not the ones that have been fabricated by humans. Gods have come and gone throughout history, just like the fideist civilizations that worshipped them.

Fideism: The doctrine that religion is the basis of all knowledge; that faith is independent of reason.

Religion has nothing to do with morality and science. We can have morality without religion; we can attain spirituality without priests, rabbis, or imams. We can explain and even predict natural phenomena without the aid of an intelligent designer. We understand how the world works without religious textbooks. We have discovered our origin without faith. We can accurately describe how the cosmos works without a god in it.

If a person does not know right from wrong, then they lack morality. They do not lack religion.

If a person does not understand how the world works, then they lack self-education. They do not lack religion. They have not been enlightened.

If we study history, we know that the Sumerians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, East Indians, Mayans, and every small and large civilization in-between believed in gods at one time or another. They did this for hundreds and even thousands of years. However, gods were created by our ancestors in an attempt to answer existential questions and explain natural phenomena.

- What caused lightening and thunder? God was angry.
- Was a comet a good omen or bad omen? Ask the fortune teller.
- What did a earthquake foretell? The end of the world.
- Why did it rain? Some god in the sky was sad and crying.
- Why did the seasons change? The harvest goddess's daughter was kidnapped and the daughter had to spend six months in hell, this made the goddess sad and

gloomy, therefore winter; when her daughter was returned for six months, the goddess was in a sunny disposition, therefore summer.

- What did the planets, stars, and other celestial bodies represent? Gods and goddesses.

Religion begins where knowledge ends.

Now, let's scrutinize religion from a modern perspective.

- Did Moses really talk to a burning bush on a mountaintop that was supposedly god?
- Did Noah really save civilization and all the animals on his big boat (arc)?
- Was Jesus really the child of a virgin mother; and he walked on water, and arose from the dead?
- Did Muhammad really receive the will of god through an angel?

Unfortunately, there are billions of people who still believe religious nonsense. They have fought, still do fight, and will fight each other to the death for their outdated religious beliefs. Witness the Christian Crusade, the Muslim Jihad, and the Jewish Protocols of the Elders of Zion (if it's to be believed as authentic). Three religions with supposedly one god, and in practice they can't even agree on the basic principles of that one god, hence the perpetual conflicts. The god question is, "Whose god?"

We are the most advanced civilization that Earth has ever harbored. Despite this fact, there are hundreds of millions of people who lack the fundamental principles of basic science. In a 2014 survey by the U.S. National Science Foundation, 26% of Americans thought the Sun revolved around the Earth; similarly, 34% of Europeans thought the same thing. In addition, 52% of Americans were unaware that humans evolved from earlier species of animals. The fact that the Earth revolves around the Sun was settled by Nicolaus Copernicus in the 16th century, but was suppressed by the Catholic Church. Similarly, the theory of evolution by Charles Darwin is being perverted and suppressed to this very day by devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Now, if the U.S. and Europe are considered First World, how much hope of enlightenment is there in Developing and Third World countries that are steeped in religion?

A Brief History of Religion

A religion becomes dominant when it is adopted by the elite and ruler. It's a top-down adoption and expansion pattern, and those who blindly follow are considered "sheep" by the enlightened. This herd mentality, blind faith, follow-the-leader, peer pressure, mob rule, or by any other name is true of the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths.

First, examine Christianity, which was an illegal and persecuted cult for centuries throughout the Roman Empire. However, this cult became fashionable when Roman Emperor Constantine I adopted it as his official religion and instituted it in the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. From there, Christianity "borrowed" most ideas for Jesus Christ's divinity from the Pagans and Egyptians: birth from a virgin mother, rise after three days of death, Christmas for Winter Solstice, the son of god, the bringer of light, and so on. The Christian faith is a mashup of other faiths. Not surprisingly, there are now scholars who doubt if Jesus Christ had existed at all. If these scholars are right, then Jesus Christ was a fictional character. If Jesus did exist, he might have been a spiritual teacher or philosopher who was lionized and exaggerated by the Creed of Nicaea and subsequent ecumenical councils of Nicaea.

We know from history that Jesus Christ's godly features were fabricated to make him more appealing to the commoners. In truth, Jesus Christ was a product manufactured by the apostles of Nicaea, the predecessors to the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. As we note from history, Jesus was not considered divine until three hundred years after his supposed birth, when it was convenient for the ruling authority. Since the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, and largely thanks to the largesse of Emperor Constantine I, Christianity had spread with the Roman Empire. However, the Roman Empire has long since collapsed, but the Holy Roman Empire is alive and well in the Roman Catholic Church—the Pope has replaced the Emperor. The largest landowner in the world today is the Roman Catholic Church (the Vatican). There is much more to Christianity than religion.

Second, examine Judaism. It is believed that most Jews today are not descendants of the original Semites of the Middle East, but they are converts of European and Turkic heritage (Khazarian Empire theory, 618 - 1048 AD). Nowadays, to label someone a Jew is ambiguous. The Jews could be identified as a race who shared a common ancestry in Judea (Palestine), as the Romans called it. Or the Jews could be identified as a religious group who have adopted Judaism. Since 250 AD, the Jews have been ex-

pelled about 109 times from territories and nations in which they had inhabited—the two most prominent are the Spanish Inquisition (1492) and the World War II Holocaust (1939 - 1944). The Jews have also been victims of numerous edicts and pogroms. Whether they were considered subversive, as scapegoats, or just generally disliked for their belief that they were the Chosen People of God, the Jews as a group have suffered much throughout history. As religious hogwash goes, if god loved the Jews so much that he made them the Chosen People, he would have made more of them, like the 1.1 billion East Indians or the 1.3 billion Chinese. And god certainly would not have created the Israelites to be dependent on the generosity of American taxpayers.

Third, examine Islam, which is the youngest of the three major religions today. Islam came about when Muhammad (Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim, 570 - 632 AD) had a series of “divine” revelations. He claimed that the angel Gabriel had revealed to him the words of god. These revelations were recorded in what is now the Muslim holy book, the Quran. When the sheiks and kings of many Arabian tribes adopted Muhammad’s teachings, their followers became Muslim adherents. The word “Muslim” means he who submits to god, or the will of god. In whole, the Muslim faith is based entirely on the account of one man, a businessman no less, who claimed an angel had spoken to him, and that this angel had revealed to him the will of god. If anyone made that claim today they would be locked up in a psychiatric ward and the key thrown away. Destructive Muslim concepts such as infidels, Sharia Laws, fatwa, and jihad are familiar to non-Muslims. The Quran appears to be a book of fiction written by a man similar to the one who founded Scientology, Ron L. Hubbard. Humanity could face another Dark Age if Islam is spread unchecked. Islam is a backward religion, nothing in it agrees with reason, science, and especially basic human rights.

The three major religions have their root in the Middle East. Today, the region of the Earth that is constantly at war is the Middle East—people with the same ancestry killing each other because they belong to different sects or branches of the same religion. That is Karma on display. If left unrestrained, these religious numbskulls will continue to kill each other to establish nations governed by religious laws (read: theocratic societies, outdated, backward, irrational, oppressive, tyrannical).

Religion was, and is still, used to control people, not enlighten them; religion is the dumbing down of Humanity's potential, because religion is arbitrary and subjective. It is science that enlightens and reason that establishes the principles of morality. If we are to seriously enquire about god, we need to ask questions that we have no answers to.

- Who created god?
- Does god exist in the form of mass, energy, or both?
- Why has the voice or image of god never been heard or seen by a group of people? It's always unverifiable stories from a lone nut in the wilderness.

We've mapped the Earth, the solar system, part of the Milky Way galaxy, and have begun creating a 3-dimensional map of the Universe—where does god reside? If the answer is “everywhere”, that is Nature. Nature exists everywhere.

Religious fanatics like to challenge the agnostic or atheist with, “If you don't believe in god, then what do you believe in?”

A good place to start would be to believe in universal knowledge, collective wisdom, and spirituality. Humanity. Nature. Science.

If you need to believe in someone, believe in yourself.

5. Are We Alone In The Universe?

Most unlikely. There are an estimated 100-400 billion stars in a galaxy and 100 billion galaxies in the Universe, and these estimates keep increasing as new discoveries are made. Mathematically, according to the theory of chaos and the Frank Drake equation, there are millions of lifeforms in the Universe and probably thousands with our intellectual capacity, and some even exceeding our intellectual capacity. The primordial soup of elements that kickstarted life on Earth is a mathematical reality in millions of other solar systems in the cosmos.

Abiogenesis: The original evolution of life or living organisms from inorganic or inanimate substances.

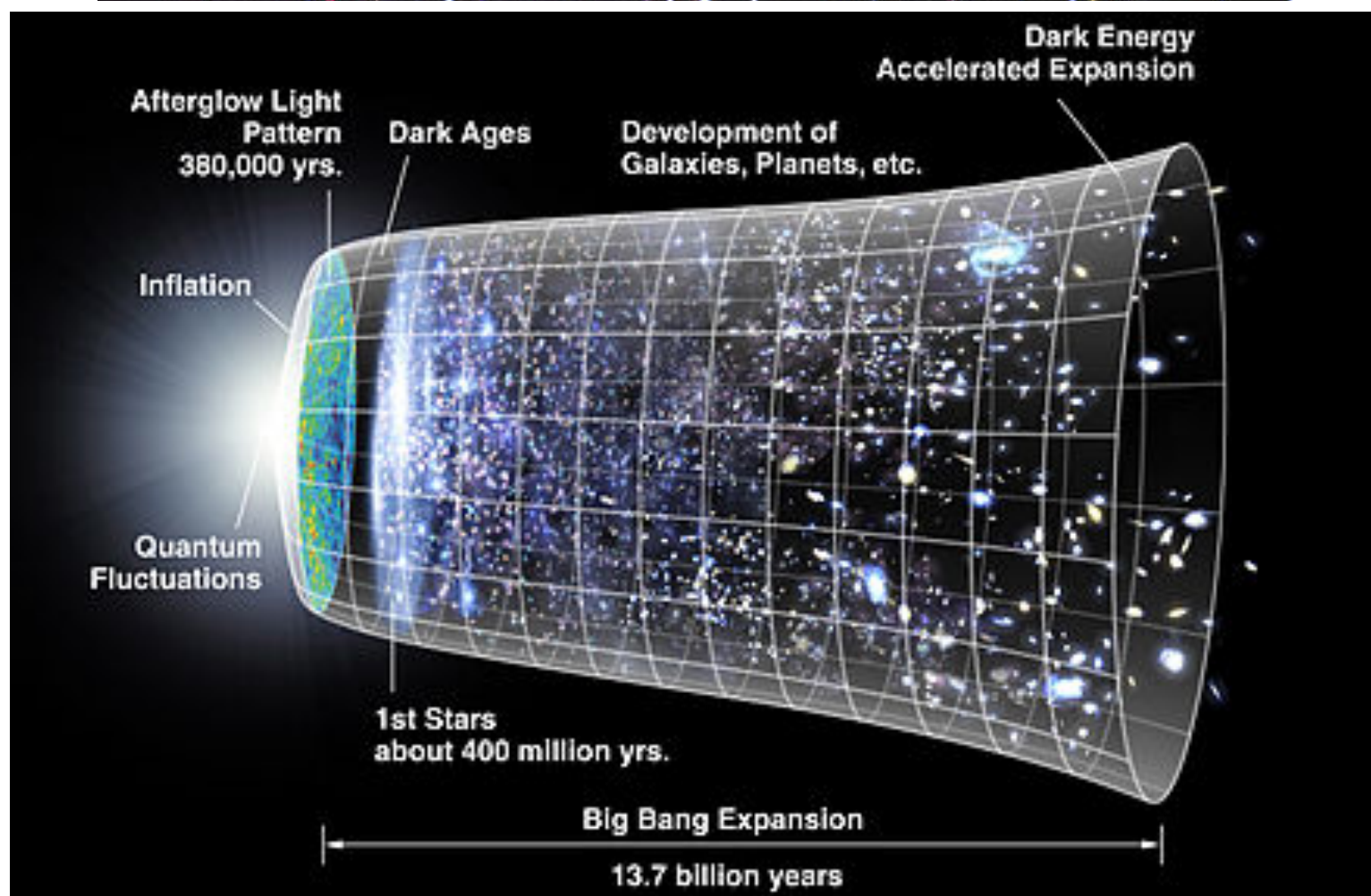
The process of abiogenesis that occurred on Earth, based on mathematical probabilities alone, is repeatable on other planets: atoms forged into light elements, light elements fused into heavier elements in the Sun, then a primordial soup of elements that meshed into inorganic molecules, then electrified and energized to form organic molecules, then prokaryote cells (cells with no nucleus), then eukaryote cells (cells with a nucleus capable of passing on genetic information), to multicellular organisms, to microbes and bacteria, then various species of amphibians, birds, arthropods, reptiles, and mammals. We are the product of Nature's experiment and patience, and Her laws permeate the cosmos. As Michael Faraday put it, "Nothing is too wonderful to be true, if it be consistent with the laws of nature."

Furthermore, according to String Theory, our Universe may only be one of many universes in a multiverse.

Our Universe is roughly 13.7 billion years old. The Earth is approximately 4.55 billion years old and not 6,000 - 10,000 according to Christian (Bible), Jewish (Torah), and Muslim (Quran) textbooks. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are Abrahamic religions—they share the same root and believe that life originated in a corner of the Middle East 6,000 - 10,000 years ago through Creationism. Furthermore, peace is supposed to be a central tenet of these religions but they have been locked in perpetual conflict with no end in sight.

Our spiral Milky Way Galaxy (top) and Universe (bottom).

We are infinitesimally small in the cosmos. We do not need religion to divide us even smaller.



6.What Happens To Us After We Die?

There is an afterlife. We know this from observation. However, there is no evidence supporting the notion of heaven and hell as places of reward and damnation in the afterlife. Our afterlife resides in the memories of those we leave behind. Think of all the great people throughout history who are still with us in spirit because they touched our lives—their souls are their Afterlife. Whether our soul becomes famous or infamous, praised or condemned, admired or damned in the afterlife depends on whether we performed good or evil while we lived.

The good that we do will be remembered after we die—the greater the deeds, the longer the afterlife. Our essence lives on through loved ones and service to Humanity.

Throughout this book, we've met the afterlives of many great people who have enlightened us and shown us the path.

The cycle of life as designed by Nature is: birth and death, birth and death, ad infinitum...When something dies, its energy gives birth to another entity in the cosmos.

Life With Nature In The Cosmos

In summary, the 6 Big Questions of life are:

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

If the first question can be answered with empirical evidence and by the process of elimination, then the answer to, “Is there a god?”, should be self-evident.

The God Dilemma

We are infinitesimally small in an unimaginably massive cosmos. If there were a god, it would have to be bigger than unimaginably big to have created the Universe and everything in it. If there were a god in this staggering immensity of existence, who is arrogant or delusional enough to think that god would care for her or him? This god, or intelligent designer, would have to be incomprehensibly powerful and its domain so immeasurably vast, that it would not care what we thought of it either way.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all the brave women and men throughout history who fought against oppression, injustice, and tyranny. They stood up against oppression, injustice, and tyranny by the sword and of the mind. It is because of their courageous souls that many of us are able to enjoy the liberties and amenities of modern life. They are forever with us in spirit because they advanced knowledge and protected innate human rights for every person. They did what was beneficial for Humanity and were awarded with an everlasting Afterlife—their voices echo in this book.

We must have the courage and resolve to carry on their work. In doing so, we can only hope that our light will shine a fraction as bright as theirs in our Afterlife.

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